

SEVEN DAYS

FERRY tales PAGE 20

How commuters are coping without the Champlain Bridge

Might Site

Will a new Vermont law protect a Williston couple from a powerful religious sect?

BY ANDY BROMAGE
PAGE 23

SERVING JUSTICE

PAGE 16

Judge Sessions talks sentencing



SWORD PLAY

PAGE 30

A fitness class goes samurai



CUPCAKE CRAZY

PAGE 34

The trendy minis take Vermont





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Disability of World
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SEVEN DAYS beyo

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SEVEN DAYS

THE DAILY NEWS

ENTERTAINMENT & RECREATION

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FEEDback

READER REACTION TO RECENT ARTICLES

SEPARATION ANXIETY

[In the October 2 "War Games" column, Peter Shumlin wrote:] "It's off for Louie Proust at the Vermont Presidential for the cybernauts."

Best column Peter reported that Senate President Tim Peter Shumlin (D-Windham) has separated from his wife of 18 years.

Why is this news? I guess it's the theme of the column, "Secret Lives, Public Affairs" but I really don't see relevance beyond that and, frankly, it made me feel a little crazy to be reading about the sex of his wife on the internet wall.

But that "sex" reference" was vague would likely look wrong.

I enjoy reading the column. It does a great job, but that news doesn't fit in a really high "War Games" standard.



Tim Shumlin
MIDDLEBURY

SHUMLIN'S SECRET

[Sen. President Tim Shumlin is featured prominently on my list of weird public servants ("War Games," October 2)]

He has created a system of tabulations that someone would in the long run make the system the system in the long run.

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part of the government — has been spent on routine bookkeeping. Look, Mr. Shumlin is working through the crisis. Any wonder why he has delayed in announcing his intentions. Maybe you know how.

Sue Wilson
BURLINGTON

CRITICAL ADDITION

I have wanted to write my appreciation of Margot Hornum's Seven Days reviews for some long time. Her piece on "Where the Wild Things Are" caught something I had not seen in other reviews of the movie, so I thought that a good time to acknowledge the strength and analogy of her critical writing.

How often do we read reviews and see the movie? How many times do we find ourselves knowing the film more from the review and some critic's description than our own viewing? Are most folks older than 24 still reading regularly to the movies?

For the many film critics (and not just the play's very witty game of being made by audience movie plots, highlighting relevancy most recent rules and, in truth, looking with the general perspective of the least the street scenes. Margot's review didn't know how to play that game or, strictly chosen not to do so. When she does find a narrative plot, she often makes it of an observation. Often I have found her reviews more entertaining than the film themselves, if I'm not there.

Her review of "Where the Wild Things Are" is more about how children and adults look at movies than the movie itself. Although she does write beautifully about its characters, story and use of cost-effective special effects.

TIM NEWSOM

TRIPPOINT SKIDS INTO BANKRUPTCY



WINTER/SPRING 2011

7/24/2011 11:00 AM

WINTER/SPRING 2011

WINTER/SPRING 2011



Local News

Local News

Local News

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VERMONT

Who tackles the subject of childhood abuse in a movie format? Who would dare to say that older kids might not like a kid's movie and that parents' kids might find it too scary? *Max* (due in theaters and doesn't seem to care what people think) has critical writing: the inclusion I treat as

I don't know if I can talk up *Max* into something. *Where the Wild Things Are*, but his review has made me want to try

Kenneth Peck
DUBLIN, IRE
Pick up a camera, professor and independent documentary filmmaker

more and more videos recently, but, with the new format, you have become totally relevant. I can think of no reason to pick up a copy again.

For you guys, even financially viable again?

Russ Martin
CHILMARK
(Editor's note: SA, all of the features mentioned above are still in the paper. Maybe check the table of contents? And yes, we're financially viable. Thanks for your concern.)

GO MILE

If Vermont and other states want to keep drunk drivers off the streets, they should start by insisting on sobriety reporting about DUI cases ("Blood Warriors," October 7). DUI is not DWI or drunk driving. It doesn't take any legal brilliance to read Vermont's DUI statute (21 V.S.A. section 232) and to see that this law does not even mention intoxication.

The statute may still be called "DUI" in some states, but the off-lease stuff in all states now is that of Driving Under the Influence and not Driving While Intoxicated.

Set the media print on watchdog as such hysterical hyperbole as saying, "It's my green day, so I'll drink." Members of drunk driver have down mountains and country highways.

Monsters. The fact is that on my green day, my driver's license is the offense of DUI by driving with a BAC above .08. But the great majority of these drivers are not monsters; they are just "too yucky down the road," and they're really having so idea that they are violating the law.

A BAC of .08 means about four drinks for an average-sized man. Anyone who knows how to hold his liquor is not even hauled at that level, much less drunk. And such a person, if he has been treated by two reputable sources to believe that DUI laws prohibit

FEEDBACK IN PICS

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SUZZ KILL

Business Pioneers hit on only the high points of Green Mountain Coffee ("Cool Beans," October 28). I support them more and do not want to discourage them. However, the image that the company promotes suffers from some glaring omissions. *Business Pioneers* know not only succeeded but called significant attention to GMC's needs to be preserved by their consumers to fix those problems.

First, The product they promote is not brewed in the individual cup to brew. Every single cup of coffee with those brewers comes in a nondrinkable plastic container. The new this product, grows, the new material GMC will be, and the more likely it is for other companies to create another wasteful system.

Second, I have seen *Bioproducts Green Mountain coffee cups*. I have seen how they are decorated.

Third, I have frequently had old, like water, warmed down Green Mountain coffee at a gas station. GMC might do a good job of tracking this coffee from growers to the US, but then quality control the many gas stations that serve it is lacking.

I spoke to the GMC representative at their headquarters about this. The real they are working on the quality control and on a delivery mechanism that did not use plastic cups. Until they do find that, they should not claim to be green while promoting such a dirty coffee delivery mechanism. And stand on their marketing is nothing more than hypocritical greenwashing. *Business Pioneers* should have a better job asking attention to these issues: her article

Joey Adler
BURLINGTON

FUNNY STUFF

Yeah, no "New Quins" no "Brighten Days," no "Real Mom," no "Double Terms" but plenty of articles about it weekly news sportsline. The newspaper has been getting



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- FRI 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH
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- MON 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH
- TUE 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH
- WED 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH
- THUR 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH
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- SAT 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH
- SUN 8 PM: GOLF FROM THE 19TH

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the MAGNIFICENT



MUST SEE, MUST DO THIS WEEK
COMPILED BY CAROLYN FOX

THURSDAY 5 - SUNDAY 8

Shake It

It's been months since you've had the
good feeling of a week, but it's not an earthquake. It's
the pounding beat of the music at the
12th annual West African Dance
& Drum Festival, put on by the
African Cultural Center and Drum Theater. And
four days of traditional music and dance
at the 12th annual West African Dance
& Drum Festival, put on by the
African Cultural Center and Drum Theater. And
four days of traditional music and dance
at the 12th annual West African Dance
& Drum Festival, put on by the
African Cultural Center and Drum Theater.



SEE CALHOUN LIVING ON PAGE 30



SATURDAY 7 - SUNDAY 8

Jump on the Bandwagon

Good thing it's November! There's a get
together before the mercury dips in my
Burlington and Mount Vernon. **Wagon Ride
Weekend** is a don't miss fall event on
Staged tours of the historic homes
set off for a look back in time
from the 18th century to the 19th. Why
white gloves out and about, you'll
see the best of the area and escape the
house. How long, Vermont.

SEE CALHOUN LIVING ON PAGE 30

FRIDAY 6

Paving the Way

It's always exciting when a local
music group brings some major to
the scene. More than half a century old
The **Panel Hair Quartet** is
just that. In 1964, the group
and became the young
band. The group is a mix of
styles, but all of them are
and more. In 2007, the group
was named the top band in
the state. The group is a mix of
styles, but all of them are
and more. In 2007, the group
was named the top band in
the state.

SEE CALHOUN LIVING ON PAGE 30

everything else...

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WEDNESDAY 4 - SATURDAY 7

Heard It Through the Grapevine

Most of us would like to think we left behind
the 1960s and 1970s, but the St. Michael's College production of
The Sound of Music proves that it's not so
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music, love, and life in the
1960s and 1970s. The show
is a complete world of
music, love, and life in the
1960s and 1970s. The show
is a complete world of
music, love, and life in the
1960s and 1970s.

SEE CALHOUN LIVING ON PAGE 30

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FAIR GAME | open season on normal politics BY SHAY TOTTEN

The Paper Trail

The media has engaged in plenty of news-gathering and lead-in rapping in the wake of several small "leak" scandals involving officials keeping info secret from the public.

Oh, if we only had more resources, we'd be able to hold officials accountable, has been the mainstream media's lament. What would the public do without us? How can democracy survive without us?

Sure, newspaper layoffs and the downward financial spiral have forced us to cut corners, but among those left standing, many are the help that wonder, *Am I safe?* Still, uncertainty shouldn't make journalists forget what they're paid to do: write a journal, not a tell-all.

As "Pier Game" pointed out two weeks ago, the common thread among scandals big and small in Burlington, Montpelier, Wisconsin, Waterbury and elsewhere is the increasingly common use of executive sessions to discuss matters that are better aired in public forums.

But there's more to it. After reviewing a stack of documents requested from Montpelier Governor to the \$600,000 overpayment the city made to Scott Cochrane Inc., I can say City Manager **WILLIAM FRASER** made numerous, public comments about the repayment, at least three, dating back to 2003. They were included in weekly newspaper reports provided to the mayor and council. The public and the media could review them at Montpelier City Hall.

In fact, Fraser told "Pier Game" that if a reporter or any member of the public had asked about this financial profligacy, he was prepared to turn it over immediately.

"**DAN SCOTT** asked us in our meeting if we could keep this quiet, and we said that we couldn't—that it would affect our budgets, and I would turn over a copy of the note if anyone asked," recalled Fraser.

As a result of the public exposure, the city will post its cost of materials online. It's also entering an policy regarding executive sessions.

In Burlington, the paper trail is not as easy to follow, and that has fostered

all kinds of conspiracy theories. In fact, the biggest "error" related to the \$12 million "loan" from the city's check book to Burlington Telecom may be one of omission. When asked? It could be any number of folks, from Chief Administrative Officer **JONATHAN LEPPOLD** to Mayor **KEVIN KANE** and the city's cadre of lawyers.

I can honestly say the media—"Pier Game" included—missed the story in Burlington, too, along with the Burlington City Council and the Board of Finance.

DAN SCOTT ASKED US IN OUR MEETING IF WE COULD KEEP THIS QUIET, AND WE SAID THAT WE COULDN'T—THAT IT WOULD BE IN OUR BUDGETS AND I WOULD TURN OVER A COPY OF THE NOTE IF ANYONE ASKED.

MONTPELIER CITY MANAGER WILLIAM FRASER

All the evidence was right there in the city's audited financials. Look at the annual report available at Burlington City Hall and you can see BT's deficit march roaring between FY 2007 and FY 2008.

As a result, the FY 2008 audited budget—issued in June 2008 and available on the city's website—explains the shortfall: "Burlington Telecom has negative pooled cash in the amount of \$245,981 at June 30, 2008. Subsequent to year end, that negative balance has increased substantially. The City intends to reference on debt to include paying back the other City funds. The City believes it has the ability to do this. However, if this does not happen, it could have an adverse impact on the City's cash flow and on the classification of the negative cash, resulting in a significant reduction in the City's General Fund balance."

Story stay? Who writes? News other than the alleged loan, or, less gainous, himself? CND Leppold.

Who Knows What When?

As city councilmen and media continue to sort through the Burlington Telecom mess, a couple of questions keep coming back: How did the "loan" approval go unmentioned? And what did people know and when did they know it?

To the first question, as "Pier Game" has reported, the decision to use pooled cash to fund BT was largely Leppold's call, and was done so with the apparent consent of the mayor. BT managers and perhaps several members of the city's crack legal team.

The loan was made without explicit approval from the council or the Board of Finance. In other words, a decision with checks but no balances. Leppold says the board, and the council, gave explicit approval when they OK'd the council budget.

Mayor **John Kane** and he will implement our rules governing how money from the cash pool is loaned to various departments, with the goal of providing greater transparency. His recommendations will be available on Monday at the Board of Finance meeting.

That's great for moving forward, but one has to wonder: anyone on the council or the Board of Finance ever reads the detailed reports supplied to them by the city's outside auditors, **SULLIVAN POWERS**? Audit reports, which are considered public documents, are distributed annually to the Board of Finance.

In both the FY 2007 and FY 2008 audits, the green symbolizes at Sullivan & Powers raised concerns about how the city was accounting for BT's cash loan to fund its operations.

In FY 2007, the auditors noted that the city was not properly accounting for how the BT loan was being recorded in capital assets. In FY 2008, they believed the loan was a possible violation of its Certificate of Public Good (CPG).

Both years, Sullivan & Powers noted that BT has "no controls or procedures in place to monitor and document compliance" with the CPG. This supports the fact that BT has a full-time compliance officer.

Good to know someone was paying attention and speaking up. The bad is no one was listening.

The Fix Is In

Two separate committees formed to address the Burlington Telecom scandal. Fraser will start meeting next week.

OPINION

Vermont Judge William Sessions Holds Court on the U.S. Sentencing Commission

BY SALLY WEST JOHNSON

The Vermont judge who ruled in favor of the Serris Club in a landmark auto emissions case is going to head up the United States Sentencing Commission. President Barack Obama nominated William K. Sessions III, 63, for the plum post early this April. After a delay — thought to be payback for Obama's nomination of Serris Motors — the full U.S. Senate finally overrode Sessions' 11 veto on October 1.

A Middlebury grad, Sessions went to law school in ILIC, but returned to Vermont in 1973 to clerk for Judge William Durr in Addison County District Court. He worked as a public defender, as private practice and as an adjunct professor at Vermont Law School before President Clinton appointed him to serve as judge on the U.S. District Court in Burlington in 1989. Since 2002, he's been chief judge in the court where Vermont's federal cases are tried.

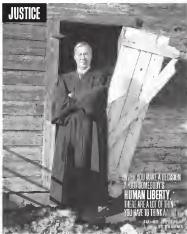
Sessions has issued a number of controversial rulings from his bench about the definition of sex abuse. In the United States v. Donald Hill — a murder in which the post-prisoner brought a Vermont woman across state lines to kill her — he found the death penalty unconstitutional because of sentencing procedures. In 2006, he allowed Vermont to reject bail requiring standards set by the State of California as a challenge to federal preemption law.

Sessions has served as vice chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission since 1996, but as chairman he will have considerable power over the body's agenda. That means Sessions will be instrumental in deciding what comes to trial and how long an offender gets to jail for committing one. It extends over beyond medical marijuana, seven days caught up with Sessions at Middlebury College where he was giving a presentation on federal preemption and constitutional law.

SEVEN DAYS: Why did Congress create the United States Sentencing Commission in 1984?

WILLIAM SESSIONS: The commission was the product of negotiations between liberals and conservatives to reduce or eliminate the disparity in sentencing. For federal crimes. A number of studies had indicated if you were being sentenced in Alabama, for instance you were receiving a totally different sentence than if you were sentenced in New York. More than that, people would say that the sentence you received in a multi-judge district would depend on the back of the driver. Some judges would impose probationary sentences while other judges would impose very significant prison sentences. Senators Kennedy and Thurmond were basically the authors of the act.

SD: You were appointed to the commission by President Clinton in 1996. served



as vice chair during the Bush years and were elevated to chair by President Obama. Does the USSC have a discernible political bias, and have you seen it change over time?

WS: It doesn't have a political bias. In fact it's one of the few significant organizations that work as a totally bipartisan way. There are seven commissioners; three from one party, three from the other party and the chair is selected by the president. And in 17½ years on the commission we have tried to work by consensus, and that's been extraordinarily successful. For 10 years, we've dealt with a lot of controversial issues. Technically we come close to consensus on virtually everything.

SD: How do changes in the sentencing guidelines come about?

WS: We propose a list of guideline changes prior to May 1st of each year. We send Congress a list of changes to the guidelines Congress has six months to reject those you possibly if they don't reject them, they become

law. It has happened only two times in history that Congress has rejected our proposals.

SD: What are the commission's strengths?

WS: One generally thinks of sentencing as being the responsibility of the judge. That's not true. All three branches of government have an interest in sentencing policy. Congress has an interest because it determines the penalties that are attributable to crimes, and the president, through the Department of Justice, has an interest in what penalties are imposed. The sentencing commission meets at the direction of these three branches of government, and we try to reflect in the guideline system the interests and input of all three branches.

Second, we have a whole set of factors that judges should consider before imposing sentence. When you make a decision about somebody's prison term, there are a lot of things you have to think about. In some ways the guidelines reflect the wisdom of the public

— this is what the public experts in regard to those particular offenses with, of course, exceptions based on the individual characteristics of the defendant.

The other advantage is that it reflects discovery. We have a system that says ranges of penalties that are applied automatically. If you are going into court in Arizona, you are being sentenced the same as someone going into court in Indiana.

SD: Originally the sentencing commission established mandatory minimum sentences and mandatory guidelines for sentencing. The mandatory guidelines were found unconstitutional in 2000, but the minimums still exist. Do they create a problem for judges?

WS: Guidelines are not advisory, but Congress has the power to impose mandatory minimum sentences. Congress says that if you are charged with a crime, and your offense involved it or more crimes, then your mandatory minimum sentence must be at least five years. The corresponding mandatory maximum five years for a first offense is 300 years. That's where the 190 limit comes into play. That's what Congress is doing with at this point, trying to reduce or eliminate the disparity between crack and powder.

Judges do not have the power to impose a sentence below those minimums. There may be circumstances in which a judge will want to impose a sentence below the mandatory minimum. The sentencing commission has, in the past, written reports opposing mandatory minimum sentences. The latest report was 1991. Congress has just passed a law which will be asking the sentencing commission to write a full report on mandatory minimum sentences that must be submitted within one year.

SD: What are the greatest challenges facing the commission at the moment?

WS: The difficulty is always in balancing the input of the various branches of government. That's a continuing concern and responsibility that we have.

If you're talking about specific issues facing the commission, probably the crack versus powder disparity was the big concern. The commission proposed to Congress a few years ago that the 100:1 ratio be addressed and that the ratio should be no greater than 20:1 and that there should be no increase in guidelines for powder cocaine. That has not been accomplished to date.

Two to three years ago, the commission, as its own goal to reduce penalties for each case by two levels on the sentencing guideline table. That involves in an average two years. And then we decided to apply those reduced penalties retroactively. We went back into the prison — people who had been

Is Vermont's Department for Children and Families Doing Enough to Address Abuse and Neglect?

BY KEN PICARD

Critics of Vermonters are still reeling from a revelation that a local school teacher sexually abused two of his male students over a period of five years. The charges against Shamus Ryan have also focused a spotlight on the state agency charged with investigating such incidents. School officials brought their concerns about Ryan to the attention of the Vermont Department for Children and Families, but their concerns didn't trigger a full investigation.

Some child-welfare advocates are suggesting the Ryan case is symptomatic of a larger problem at DCF — namely that it lacks the resources to investigate all the reports of abuse and neglect it receives. In fact, according to a national report, Vermont has the lowest rate of child abuse and neglect investigations of any state in the country.

In a federal report published by the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Vermont's rate of investigating child maltreatment cases is 21 percent in 2007, compared to the national average of 41 percent. More recent statistics show that Vermont's rate of investigations has improved to 31 percent, but is still roughly half the national average.

One staffer in a central Vermont youth advocacy organization said that such figures are consistent with what she's heard locally from her staff for years. This worker who asked not to be identified because her agency receives DCF funding, as Ryan's "has been running wild after months" of lack reporting abuse or neglect but these reports aren't getting investigated because they "don't meet DCF criteria."

DCF Commissioner Steve Tule outlined against reading too much into the numbers at a January for Children conference held last week in Montpelier. He explained that Vermont reports on investigating abuse calls differently than other states, noting that DCF acknowledges the vast number of calls it receives, regardless of whether they're photo-documented or investigated or allegations completely unworthy of further investigation. "It's not until after you get into a phone call that you know whether someone's calling you with an actual report" of abuse or neglect, he said.

Tule called up other states in which DCF has made impressive strides in the last few years. These include a 30 percent reduction in the number of children removed from their homes and placed into foster care — from 1,000 four years ago to 680 today — and more foster kids being supported beyond the age of 18 to enable to give them a better chance of success.

That said, Tule made no attempt to deny that the economic downturn is taking a huge toll on Vermont's most vulnerable population. With more families struggling with unemployment, poverty hunger and homelessness, child welfare advocates are reporting a rise in requests for services and calls to emergency hotlines.

Overall report of child abuse and neglect are up statewide from 2008 to 2012 to 2015 in 2016. That trend reflects the latest national figures, which show an estimated 150 million American children dealt of abuse or neglect in 2012 — an astounding 10 percent increase over the number from 2007.

In the last year, Montpelier-based Parent Child Abuse Vermont has seen nearly double the demand for its family support services and screening parent classes, with requests outstripping the organization's available resources.

After a DCF responding to the growing problem? Tule pointed out that his agency has investigated 90 percent more abuse and neglect cases this year than last. The reason for the uptick, according to the commissioner, is that in September 2008 DCF switched to a centralized intake system. Instead of 12 different district offices fielding abuse and neglect calls and providing different answers depending upon who answered the phone, roughly, statewide call center now does the job, providing more consistent and standardized responses.

Specifically, as of July 1, DCF changed to a "differentiated response" system for handling abuse calls. Basically, if an agency is called about the potential abuse department has shifted its focus from trying to prove abuse in a court of law to figuring out how actions are best suited for protecting the child.

"That's been a huge change," said Tule.



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A New Theatrical Production Takes on Crime, Punishment and a Troubled Teen

BY ERIC ECKSTEIN

Following last year's run of her play *Shakespeare — a fictional drama based on the 2000 murders of Dartmouth professors Hall and Suzanne Zornig* by Chelsea Green James Parker and Robert Telford — Vermont playwright **MAURA CAMPBELL** goes with another subject: youth inspired by troubled youth.

In *Reverie* (Hill Allen, which is being produced by **GRISH CANDLE THEATRE COMPANY**), the enigmatic character is a 13-year-old girl, played by high schooler **ALEX GIBNEY** of Middlebury. Reverie, Dante's eternal just mindless that she is clearly inspired by all those on school grounds.

THEATER

Responsibility for this supervision rests with a postprofessional engaged to her case, Molly, played by **TRACEY DORCH** and with school principal Mr. Hobbey played by **KEVIN MCGRAW**. These three actors combine the cast in a play that *Reverie* examines, strives to illuminate something deeper than the conflict that brings them together.

Campbell notes that Reverie's transgression defines each character's role in an institutional structure, but the real work of rehabilitating — or simply restraining — her forces them to forge real interpersonal connections. "We all know that there has to be

a certain rigidity, or an organization can't function," Campbell says. "That is what we see in the story: how that inflexibility is so damaging. If people don't find ways to bend these rules, the people hurt."

If experience is the best teacher, for children and McGray, it's also a mind-blowing offstage Greek work in the child-care field with expertise in crisis intervention. In playing Molly she says "The biggest challenge is to not do my job... Molly is not a trained professional. I have to take that away and not know how to be an influence."

Likewise, McGraw says playing his post-grad supervisor some of the best mentors as an educator. He taught for 14 years in New York City schools and spent 29 of them in special education, where, he says, he "barged in on principals and made them look a bit to fight for my kids." McGraw's familiarity with the dramatic strains of hard-luck schools and hard-core students served him well at his Reverie audition, landing him a part almost scripted for a female character.

Playing for the kid at the center of this play means a fair amount of lightness with her. As Reverie's director, when a complicated kid vial with a break for complicating others too — one which has diagnosed with physical aggression, borderline personality disorder, unstable disorder and chronic

deaf disorder. Despite her emotions of her problems, Reverie is working in earnest, letting her mother's life's story unfold to own up to the world around her. She consumed two years earlier.

Although Gibney says she finds little resonance ground with Reverie, she nevertheless displays a skilled actor's ability to turn the charm on and off sharply and convincingly. Her expressive singing style suggests a quality of production buried beneath her character's hard exterior.

Directing *Reverie* for *Win* after the first time, Campbell says she's also done some and something (Gibney directed the play at the New York Fringe Festival in 2005 and at Wagner's Studio Theater in June 2009). The staging of *Reverie* Stage Cafe will employ video projections to evoke the larger world of the story and make room to enhance the mood. These production choices Campbell hopes will foster a sense of the intimacy of the character's relationships — the real subject of the play, in her view.

"This story is not about what [Reverie]



LY GIBNEY

Reverie," Campbell says. "It's about how she has been treated and how these three characters together find a way out of this mess."

As the play's title suggests, even a girl who has fallen through the cracks deserves to be recognized. "There are lots of people in this world who have had a bad time," Campbell adds. "Their experience is still meaningful."

FULL MONTY ACTORS **WEDNESDAY** at Grish Candle Theatre Co. (Dartmouth College, Burlington, November 6 at 8 p.m., November 7 at 7:30 and 10:30 at 8 p.m., 503-544-9444, www.grishcandletheatre.com)

Full Monty Actors Bare Their Feelings, and More

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

don't make music any more since period didn't happen, but that she's confident in her body theme and funny, affecting plot will appeal to even the most traditional tastes. "Someone who gives it a chance will appreciate the show's values," Keston assures. "These guys are doing it they can recover their bodies and their families."

Certain staging "precautions" have been taken, as well, notes **STEVEN KEMMELL**, who plays the part of the publicist Dave Belknap. For example, Keston's women change level of the F-bombs that peppered the **WOMEN TRIANGLE** video production of *Monty* this summer.

But most of the actors are still a little nervous about showing off what they've put on the *Play* Monty for 1000 pairs of legs eyes. "Put me on a podium to give a speech before a crowd of 10,000, and I'm fine," says **WILL HARRISON**, director of *Clashington College's* Center for Science & Civic Engagement. "But ask me to do something like this in front of a crowd of even less, and I'm like, Oh, my God."

Duchan, cast in the role of Noah "Blame" Simmons (a "big black man"), describes any

kind of acting in his "time of full comfort" he does have prior stage experience, however, having played *Dude the Clown* in a youth group performance.

THE HARRISON, an English teacher at Vermont Union High School, confesses to having been "really nervous" before stepping on stage in *Monty* in the role of the pokey Noodles, which he says is appropriate. "I thought a lot through that experience," Meyers says. "I made it more comfortable with my body."

Kemmel, a Montpelier teacher who also appeared in *Monty*'s *Monty*, says the actors draw inspiration from parallels between the character's situation and their own. In each scene, writers are trying to master the technique to take off their clothes in front of a laughing audience. By the time the musical reaches an amusing final number, "Let It Go," the actors, who for once they play an empowered to get off the way.

"I had to go off my own office to the stage



LYN THOMAS

YMC THEATRE has earned a reputation over the past 26 years for serving up family-friendly entertainment. The company's new show is a mature romp about male nudity and sharing gender roles, should prove no exception. The *Full Monty* is set in the crowded and lively story of an men who have been laid off from a workdays in Buffalo, NY. (The original steel town in the 1997 movie was Sheffield, England.) Depressed and bored, they decide

to try to make money by staging a strip show modeled on a Chippendales performance. Their wives and girlfriends eagerly paid \$50 to attend, but these blue-collar men passions are more closely than kinky. How are they going to make it?

Well, the Chippendales dancers left the G-strings on, so the buffed but desperate troupe promises to go on one, the *Full Monty*.

Lyric producer **DAVID EVANS** knows the

Dear Cecil,

I've often heard people say "the camera adds 10 pounds" when they're photographed. Is that just an excuse, or is there any truth to it?

Enzo



ILLUSTRATION BY

portrait. And 10 feet away, making it appear that your face has been painted on a balloon.

You say you've figured out how to compensate for the 10 pounds added by the camera, but your subject is 20 pounds overweight? Still not a problem. There are other ways to make people look thinner.

- "Short lighting" can make a broad face look thinner. The subject turns one side of his or her face toward the camera and the photographer shines a studio light on the other side. Bright lighting on only half the face tends to elongate it.
- Dress your subject in black and put him against a dark background, thereby creating an extreme contrast.
- Have the subject turn at an angle to the camera, creating a narrower silhouette.
- Let's not forget those vertical stripes.
- Get Milner Chubb to lay off the chinchlongs. Not a terribly practical hint on the day of the photo shoot, but in the long run more likely to do him some good.

N a question there is an element of denial here. Since you're not looking at yourself most of the time, it's easy to maintain a self-image reflecting the reality photographer you had 10 years ago, as opposed to the competent wreck you've become. But that's not the whole story. For reasons having to do with optics and the way your brain works, the camera can, in fact, make you look heavier than you are.

The main difference between a camera's view of the world and yours is that the camera has a single "eye" whereas you have two. That subtly changes the way things look. Here's an experiment. Pose a round object in front of a varied background — a coffee cup in front of the computer monitor worked well enough for me. From a distance of 2 or 3 feet, look at the object directly with both eyes, then one. You'll notice that, even with one eye, the object seems larger in your field of vision, and obscures more of what's behind it. It seems bigger and bulkier. In other words, it looks fat.

To find out why, look at the object first with your right eye, then your left. Notice the fundamental shift in perspective known as *parallax* — background features hidden from one eye can be seen

by the other. When you close the right eye, the brain blends the two views together. You see more of what's behind the object, making it seem smaller. Round, fuscular vision is eliminating, so is the opposite.

There are ways to compensate for the focusing effect of the camera. One is to use a telephoto lens when shooting portraits. Step back from the subject and zoom in — parallel, and that the addition of pounds, diminishes with distance. (I know a photographer who swears by the rule. "Shoot me a face whose focal length, in millimeters, is less than the weight of the subject." Sound enough? No doubt. Just saying it's a guideline you might want to keep in mind.)

If you don't have a telephoto lens but you do have digital photo editing software, you can still step back when taking portraits and crop out the extra background later on the computer. If you're on the other side of the camera, here's some advice. Watch out for amateur photographers who find they need to have the subject fill the frame. They'll tend to take

Dear Cecil,

How much nutrition do you get from eating corn? I know the day after I eat corn, what appear to be full kernels are released back into the wild. Does everyone have this condition?

Joel Being Carry Rone

It's not just you, my friend. A lot of us have had occasion to think, as one bunch of corn scientists puts it, "just passing through." A corn kernel has a tough outer hull that's about 90 percent crude fiber and none too digestible. However, the human body's capabilities include an enzyme process that enables us

to get the most out of unshorn foods. It's called chewing. Thus exposed, the inside of the kernel is loaded with nutritionally useful stuff — starch, sugar, protein and oil. Think of the hull as a wrapper around a natural candy bar.

Even if you don't chew it enough, corn probably still does you some good. My scientist-like calculation that at most 10 percent of a corn's hull is truly indigestible. We're assuming, of course, that your digestive juices manage to breach the hull, and I'm sure not going to say they don't. To be on the safe side, though, listen to Cecil: Eat-up-up-straight, get lots of bulk out, and chew your food.

BLISS BY HARRY BLISS



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NEWS CHANNEL 5 WPTZ



HACKIE | a Vermont cabbie's near miss
BY JERRISAN PONTIAC

Goo Goo Googling

Bomp, bomp, bomp. "OH TIK took you up at 8:15 to night, but I gotta run. I got another call coming in." I clicked off the one customer, something at my infernal cellphone. I could say that I have a love/hate relationship with technology but hate/hate is more on the mark. No matter how many times I try it, the cell-wasting-madness occupies me. In the relaxation time of 21st-century life, I'm very hybrid and out of breath, with no realistic hope of ever catching up.

I punched a few buttons, more or less at random.

"Hello, hello? Do you need a taxi?" "Oh, yes," the caller responded (Burdick). "I'm at St. Michaels College.

CELINE LOOKED AT ME QUIZZICALLY AS TAMIKA ANSWERED.
COVERING THE PHONE, SHE WHISPERED,

**"SHE SAYS THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS
BATTERY PARK."**

I need to get to a hair appointment downtown."

I recognized the quiet voice—slightly accented and almost casual. This regular customer was an international student from Portland, Maine, Hills.

"Hey, Celine—is that you?" "Yes, it is. Can you drive me?" I'm at my door—Pompey.

"Sure thing. I'll be right over. Where am I taking you, exactly?"

"The woman said her sister was on Rust Webb Street."

"That's what the woman said. She said it was right near the police station."

"How about that?" I prepared. "I'm shooting up to St. Mike's to get you right now, but could you give me her phone number, and I'll call her myself to get good directions?"

"That would be great," Celine said, with a sigh of relief. She gave me the number along with the woman's name—Tamika.

—Guessing through the UVM campus,

I nearly wiped out about three cars as I didled up Tamika. While driving, I can safely consume a droppp sandwich as I listen to the Red Sox and keep an eye out for buses. But I should be arrested for making cellphone calls in traffic. Meanwhile, I'm a mess.

"Hello, there. I'm trying to reach Tamika. I'm a school driver."

"Yes, this is Tamika. How can I help you?" The woman had accented Southern tones, probably African American.

"Oh, great. I'm driving a girl to your school. She told me you were on Rust Webb. I'm just not familiar with that street."

"You're a cabbie and you don't know Rust Webb?" Tamika sounded utterly incredulous. "Duhhh, that's only one of the

about. The hair of black women is a special and beautiful thing. Chase Rock, I believe, just directed an entire documentary on the subject. 'Hey, no problem,' I assured her. "Like I said, Tamika cannot imagine it's all good."

We arrived at the Burlington Police Department, and I took up a position at the Battery Park entrance, right next to the Bunshee bus. Five more minutes elapsed, and I asked Celine to call back Tamika.

"Hello, Tamika!" she said into her cell. "We're waiting for you at the police station. At the entrance at Battery Park. Do you know how long you will be?"

Celine looked at the squintingly as Tamika answered. Covering the phone, she whispered, "She says there's no such thing as Battery Park."

"Give me the phone," I said, signaling with my hand. "Tamika," I said, "we're at the main entrance to the police station. Where are you?"

"I'm at the police station, and I don't see a taxi!"

All of a sudden I heard another voice coming over the phone. "Tamika," I said, really trying to stay calm, "we're talking about the Burlington Police station, correct?"

"Yes, I'm right here. Can you hear the sirens? A siren's what was just let right up the street!"

I glanced out my window down North Avenue. No sirens, not an ambulance in sight. "The Burlington Police station," I repeated, like an idiot.

"Sweet Jesus," Tamika said. "Yes, the police station Burlington North Carolina."

I dropped the phone. "Celine," I said, urgent, "I think this woman is nuts. She just said she was in North Carolina."

I could see a light switch as sheer my customer's head. "Oh, Lord," she said sheepishly. "I Googled this school. I'm sure I put in Burlington, Vermont," but maybe something screwed up."

We laughed and laughed. Later that afternoon, I called back Tamika and the two of us laughed, so well. And I will probably laugh every time I tell this hackie story for the rest of my life. ☺



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mean through there is town?" "Sorry, I just don't know it. Where are you in relation to my Church Street?" "Well, there is no Church Street. There's North Church Street or South Church Street." "Okay, okay. I thought, the woman is a total fake. 'I'll tell you what,' I suggested. "My customer said you were right near the police station. Could you meet us there in, say, 15 minutes?" "Meet you there?" Her expression was candid. I suppose mine had been, too. "I'll have to leave the shop, but, sure—I'll be there in 15."

I scooped up Celine mid, as the way into town, told her the plan. I've been driving this delightful girl since she was a freshman. A senior this year, she is a slightly built young woman with large, smiling eyes. I've found her pretty unshockable, a quality that might come in handy the way this trip was shaping up.

"Jerome, I'm so sorry to put you through all this," she said. "I just needed to find a place that knows how to cut my hair."

I understood what she was talking

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Might v. Site

Will a new Vermont law protect a Williston couple from a powerful religious sect?

BY ANDY BROMBERG

Every morning, Tim Twinn scrolls up the computer in the corner of his big cabin in Williston and scrolls for lost souls.

From a desktop in his Vermont country home, the bushy-haired Episcopalian scrolls his website for messages from religious captives—members of a secretive and virulently sect who are desperate to escape, and are members scared from their captors' exorcisms.

Most days, he's simply moderating discussion boards where those who have left the religion express anger and post messages looking for estranged family members they haven't seen in years.

Every once in a while, someone pushes the site's "emergency button." When that happens, a message is beamed to Twinn's cellphone and a sort of remote operation goes into action. Within minutes, he can contact a network of 31 so-called "helpers" stationed in 11 countries who are prepared to offer shelter, money and legal assistance to any escapee.

For four years, Twinn has dared to expose the secrets of the Exclusive Brethren, a fundamentalist Christian sect with some 43,000 worldwide followers, on his website *Peribuna*. Based among the Brethren at 1940s England, Twinn today runs what has become an online sanctuary for transgressed ex-Brethren and a portal through which those trapped inside can get out.

Now, that sanctuary is threatened by a lawsuit the Exclusive Brethren have brought against Twinn and his wife, Julie—on the claim that could shut down *Peribuna* and cut off a lifeline to distressed followers, Twinn says. The Brethren are suing the Twinnes for copyright infringement in Vermont federal court, claiming that *Peribuna* illegally obtained Brethren-owned sermons and letters with the intent of publishing them online.

The Twinnes maintain they don't have the documents. They are defending themselves using a relatively new Vermont law—in an effort to stop "strategic lawsuit against public participation" (SLAPP)—that is meant to protect citizens from frivolous lawsuits whose sole purpose is to silence critics by draining them into costly court battles.

Two attempts to settle the case have so far failed to produce a resolution. With a third settlement conference set for late

November, the eyes of Brethren around the world are watching Vermont to see how the fate of the Twinnes will influence church-run laws.

The Exclusive Brethren practice the "doctrine of separation" to shield themselves from what they see as the "trials" of modern society. Brethren aren't allowed to live, eat or socially mix with non-Brethren, and secondary education is strictly forbidden.

The Internet is regarded as a "pipeline of filth" and TV, radio and cellphones are viewed as instruments of the devil. Until very recently, the Brethren strictly banned followers from using any of these.

Brethren women are expected to wear their skirts and hair long and raise the children. When they do work, it's mostly in secretarial positions at Brethren-owned companies. Men, who wear blue pants and open-collared shirts, work in light industry and often professions that minimize contact with the outside world.

"You ever see the film *The Village*?" asks Twinn. "It's a very similar structure to Out, Storme inside. If you go outside, it's dangerous. There will be dragons."

When someone leaves the Exclusive Brethren, either voluntarily or through excommunication, they are cut off from family and friends who remain inside, a process known as being "withdrawn from." Ex-members are even denied an obituary from leaving about the birth, death or marriage of a loved one who remains in the community.

Twinn's family was withdrawn from in 1979, when he was 15, and he's spent his adult years battling the demons that linger from what he says was a strange and nervous upbringing. A self-made developer by profession, he created *Peribuna* to connect lost Brethren, educate the public about the sect and offer assistance to anyone in need of support here.

For three years, Twinn operated *Peribuna* at a modestly priced home, but the Brethren believed he was behind the site after somehow listing an IP address associated with *Peribuna* to Vermont, where they knew Twinn resided. The

sect pursued him in Canadian court, bringing an unsuccessful legal action meant to shut Twinn in to the webserver.

In 2003, the Exclusive Brethren finally caught up with him. Their publishing arm, Bible and Gospel Trust (BGT), sued Tim and Julie Twinn in Vermont for copyright infringement. The Brethren have hired a powerful international law firm with offices in Washington, D.C., and are seeking monetary damages that the Twinnes say could wipe them out.

Brethren lawyers claim their sole interest is in protecting copyrighted property and collecting whatever monetary damages the court deems fair—not sniffing out a network of defectors. The Twinnes view the Brethren's suit as a baseless attempt to silence a critic, diagnosed as a legitimate legal claim.

"We don't wish the death of the Exclusive Brethren," Tim Twinn says. "We're not after them. We're after the ability of families to talk."

Tim and Julie Twinn live in a log cabin surrounded by woods at the end of a long gravel driveway in Williston. A

night, Twinn recalls his upbringing among the Exclusive Brethren and the events that put him in their crosshairs.

Twinn was 8 years old when he first tasted the bitterness of growing up Brethren. "The sect's world leader issued an edict that banned smoking, pets, and Twinn's cat, Tippy—a skinny black feline with white socks—was immediately put to sleep."

The doctrine of separation isolated Twinn from public-school classrooms, one of whom was his friend.

"That was rough, because I wasn't allowed to eat with them," he says. "I wasn't allowed to watch a show for several decades if a TV came out, I had to leave. I would eat with my grandparents—walk a mile to have lunch—and return to school."

Radio and television were banned, so Twinn grew up on one of the few English language of the 1960s not scripted in North America. He broke the rules, though, secretly reading the comic newspaper *Melody Maker* and listening everything he could about what became his favorite band, The Moody Blues, without ever leaving their music.

Recommunication was rampant in those days, Twinn remembers, and even the slightest hint of delinquency was met with harsh punishment. Twinn's father was caught in the fever and withdrawn from what his father, Laurence, spoke



FOR FOUR YEARS, TWINN HAS DARED TO EXPOSE THE SECRETS OF THE EXCLUSIVE BRETHREN, A FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIAN SECT WITH SOME 43,000 WORLDWIDE FOLLOWERS, ON HIS WEBSITE.



Tim and Lolita Twissan, at their home in Winthrop, display the voluminous lawsuit against them.

too blatantly at a Brethren assembly meeting.

"That got up to give a word — that's what they called it — a scripture reading," says Twissan, who was 15 at the time. "He spoke about Peter walking on the water and what happened when he spoke his word away from Jesus and he sank. And he said, Brethren, who are we looking up?"

Twissan's emphasis was not lost on the crowd. Watching earthly Brethren leaders mislead the Lord and you, too, will sink. The Twissans were ashamed and ultimately excommunicated.

Tim Twissan pursued a career in computer programming and software development and quickly proved a natural. He met Lolita in 1986 as an Internet pro pal, and the two married the following year. They moved to follow a native Vermont, bought a house, and rode the tech bubble to riches before it burst in 2000.

Twissan says he never thought much about his upbringing until, in 1998, he discovered a website, ExclusiveBrethren.org, devoted to reconnecting former followers. The stories Twissan read there — of broken families, shattered lives and people driven to despair — dredged up long-buried memories.

anonymity reputation of such domains.

So Twissan registered Pebe.net in Las Angeles and launched the site in 2004. ("Pebe" refers to Plymouth Brethren, or PB, and is the nickname Exclusive Brethren give themselves.) He set up a public facebook and members-only forum where former Brethren, united for authenticity, could connect.

Ex-Brethren flooded to the new website, filling it with heartrending confessions, such as this one by Craig Hoyle of New Zealand:

The 25, and I was thrown out of the [Exclusive Brethren] at the beginning of

"Suddenly, I discovered why I am who I am." Twissan says. "I've been diagnosed with [attention deficit disorder] stemming from post-traumatic stress. I started to understand about my life, why I'd been a little bit different."

The website connected long lost friends and relatives for seven years before, in 2008, it was shut down and hundreds of ex-Brethren who had met there were once again torn apart. The Exclusive Brethren brought a defamation lawsuit against the site's owner, Dick Wynant, in Minnesota federal court. Wynant agreed to shut down the site and transfer ownership to the Brethren in exchange for \$10,000 and a promise by sect leaders to help Wynant reconnect with his estranged mother.

Twissan had no intention of picking up where Wynant left off until he learned that California had just passed a law permitting

May for being gay. My parents, abruptly, threw me out of their house after decades. I turned up on their doorstep to request items that had been left behind, and was refused access. My parents argued about whether I was allowed to say goodbye to my 17-year-old sister, and eventually my father grudgingly conceded. However, when I asked if I could hug her one last time, he refused. Poor. Black and bald. Her arms behind her back so that she couldn't move — she was holding her heart out. Unbearably cruel.

"That's the primary reason we do what we do — the personal stories," says Lolita Twissan. "If you built the system to choose to leave, you lose your family, your home, your business. If you're a child, your parents will hold your bank account hostage. It's the same story over and over again."

The Twissans share the work of maintaining Pebe.net, logging dozens of hours a week at the keyboard and on the phone when they're not at their regular jobs. (Tim Twissan works days at Union Station Media, a Washington, web-design firm; Lolita Twissan is a Red Cross supervisor.)

Pebe.net also hosts "Memorial Prayers" dedicated to Exclusive Brethren who were driven to suicide. One of the more shocking ones is that of David Beach, a chain smoker (which is forbidden) who was caught by his wife and reported to Brethren leaders. Beach was excommunicated — cut off from his wife and children — and descended into depression. Late one night in December 1983, Beach drove to the railroad line behind his home, laid his head on the tracks and waited for the train to come.

"He haunts me," Lolita Twissan says of Beach, her voice lowering to a whisper. "He says to me, 'Well, when you're disappointed, when you feel like giving up, please remember me. Please remember what you're doing is no important!'"

Unlike the Church of Latter Day Saints, Scientology and other religions that make it hard for members to leave, the Exclusive Brethren remain virtually unknown to many in the United States.

The sect has established assemblies in Boston, Montreal, New York, Texas and North Dakota, though precisely how many members live in the U.S. is unclear. Twissan

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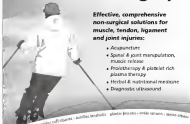


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Might v. Site BY

says he's not aware of any freedoms in Vermont.

The movement was founded in 1927 by John Nelson Dunley, an Anglican minister from Ireland who separated from the established church because he saw it as too concerned of worldly things. He founded a chapel in Plymouth, England, and drew followers who later came known as Plymouth Brethren.

The Brethren's history is marked by a series of bitter splits, power struggles and rigid sets of rules governing all aspects of work and family life. One of the first splits occurred in 1948 when followers divided into the Open Brethren, in which individual members are autonomous, and Exclusive Brethren, in which members answer to a strong, centralized leadership.

Michael Buckleard, an investigative reporter for the *Associated Press*, wrote an eye-opening account of the sect's strange and secretive practices in a 2008 book titled *Behind the Brethren*.

Buckleard writes that, though "softly named guys," the Brethren could look like the ideal human society. They possess a strong family ethic, guarantee credit to poor welfare, run low-key private schools, boast an unemployment rate of almost zero, and offer large sums of cash capital to fund enterprise around the world.

Ken Tan, Treisman's oldest child, Brethrenism's son, says his father's leadership has its pros and cons. "You can travel anywhere in the world and find a Brethren family to welcome you," he says.

But in the end, Buckleard portrays Brethren leaders as paranoid and vulnerable individuals who rail against the "falsity" of the modern world while using its systems of commerce and government to earn billions for Brethren and conspicuous leaders.

The Brethren no longer recruit new members from the outside world, but rather encourage families to have lots of children. So it's easy to see why Treisman — which openly encourages disowned Brethren to leave the sect — would present a threat.

In a phone interview from Melbourne, Buckleard says he fully respects Brethren leaders and feels not and upsets the impact of the site cannot be overstated.

"It's using a tool that is incredibly powerful," Buckleard says. "You heard every time the story that people came out and are separated from family and feel completely alone in the world, and they come across the website and feel community again."

The Brethren have recently shown some signs of loosening their rules, allowing members to own cell phones and use email (but no web surfing) and digital cameras, but Buckleard says the most

important, and most puzzling, rules have not changed.

"The relaxing of restrictions is a positive step," Buckleard says. "But to me the restriction on contact with your family is the most damaging."

That rule shows no signs of relaxing.

The Treisman legal defense will test one of Vermont's newest legal protections for minors, the new SLAPP statute.

SLAPP is designed to intimidate and silence critics by saddling them with a costly legal defense. The goal of the lawsuit isn't to win but to squander defendants financially until they abandon their criticism.

The Treisman says the Brethren's lawsuit is a classic SLAPP case, and they have needed Vermont's 3-year-old anti-SLAPP statute to their defense.

There is the first anti-SLAPP case to come before a Vermont court. If successful, it will be the first time anyone on the Second Circuit (covering federal courts in all of New York and New England) has won a case based on the law, which exists in various versions in 26 states.

"What they are really after is to try to shut this and stifle up," says the couple's lawyer, Ann Shuman of Burlington. "I see this as what does the site or as what does you say?"

The Brethren's lawsuit claims Treisman downloaded two copyrighted texts from co-member Erik Wyman's old site, *Reclaimwebbrethren.net*, and is doing so to violate the name of Wyman's article.

That, an alleged act known as "copyright infringement."

The texts in question are an address from Brethren Brethren from D. Blake, and a letter from a Brethren brother who was caught in bed with a previous world leader, a scandal that caused the biggest split in the Brethren's Brethren history.

Treisman claims he never downloaded that material and never knowingly interfered with the Wyman settlement. After Erik Wyman's site was shut down, Treisman says, he discovered much of its contents were available at the Web Archive Project, a public site that archives for and copies material of interest from the Internet.

Treisman admits to copying the Wyman site's guestbook and posting it on Treisman.net, but says he completely revised its source code so as to render it a new web page. Besides, Treisman argues, the writings of ex-Brethren posted on the guestbook legally belong to those who wrote them, not the Brethren.

The Brethren don't believe Treisman's story. Lawyers note that he made many outposts on Treisman.net saying he had the

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entire Wyman website and would make it available.

"We have ALL the material from the Wyman era and will be re-publishing it soon," reads one such post. "You can't keep 'Truth' under cover too long. And it has a lot of reinforcing."

The Brothers argue those posts amount to a confession, though Twiss says he was simply guiding sort leaders with misleading statements. Meanwhile, the Brothers are using Twiss's email attempts to evade the lawsuit to attack his credibility, hoping a jury will dismiss any testimony he might give or not believe.

When the Brothers first sued Twiss, he denied being the owner of Freshman, he denied being the source of Freshman's "Twiss" and the judge he provided technical assistance to the site when called on but did not own the domain.

Twiss stuck to that story for a while but he faded off the lawsuit with out the assistance of lawyers and ignored court-ordered discovery deadlines. When the judge finally compelled Twiss to answer the Brothers' discovery questions, he was forced to come clean and admit he was, in fact, the site's owner.

The Brothers guessed, and are now using Twiss's file as a blueprint of his case. Because they cannot prove that Twiss in fact downloaded their text (which never appeared on his web), painting him as a liar may be their best chance for victory.

Twiss now admits that, after he was served with the lawsuit, he contacted the domain registrars for Freshman to his wife's name so he could honestly say he didn't even it when questioned under oath. That's why Sofia Twiss is being sued as well.

"He even considered putting the domain name in his wife's name," Brothers lawyers wrote in court papers. "Twiss used all of these lies and 'tricks' in an effort to pervert all of City's work." Sofia has a completely different story to tell and to us," says attorney Matthew Kirkland, a partner at the international firm of Rieback & Jansons, which represents the Brothers. "Lying in a court proceeding is very serious, as lying generally is very serious morally. The Brothers allegation does not work when people lie."

Kirkland insists the Brothers aren't trying to shut down Freshman, but want to discuss what monetary damages the sort wish or how it has been financially harmed by the alleged copyright infringement.

He refers to his court filings, which say the Brothers claim have "nothing to do with calling or contacting any legitimate person or speak of the Twisses." Asked about the Brothers' motives, the only thing Kirkland will add is, "Bible and Gospel Teach" position is that their desire to recover what Twiss owes does except to the extent that

he violates his legal obligations, and that is why we have this current litigation."

Twiss's interpretation of this is looking over Freshman and posing a final weakness in his case, but his lawyer said: "We're not there yet."

"I don't think it hurts him," Son Shome says. "Unfortunately, it's type of a SLAPP suit, where you have someone who really can't afford a lawyer who tries to do what they think a lawyer does. When you're trying to do professional work you're not trained to do you can be blamed for that."

On the surface, Twiss and Sofia Twiss don't appear all that worried about the lawsuit, either. Twiss cheerfully calls the Brothers' action "lousy as a piece of paper" based on copyright infringement that couldn't possibly have happened because "nothing was ever published."

But deeper down, the couple starts to show. The Twisses know what's at stake. Not as much for themselves, they say — they're content with life in their cabin by the woods, and years of psychotherapy have slain most of the demons of Twiss' childhood. But, the couple says, they're concerned about the thousands of ex-Freshman searching for answers and lost loved ones every day on Freshman.net.

The Twisses know how devastating it would be to lose that repository of answers, routes to and personal histories. What gives them hope is that should the Brothers are already open. The lawsuit is out, and they believe any attempt to contact the managers the lawsuit goes is doomed to fail. Brothers are finding such other online, if not from home computers, then during future trips to Internet cafes.

"You can't stop it," Twiss Twiss says. "It's an Italian job, and my job is to ensure it keeps rolling down the mountain side." ☐

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Sessions BY DAVID

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Q: Tax commission will meet next week to discuss issues for the upcoming year. What issues are likely to be on the agenda?

A: We have tax issues, cash income and poverty income in a possible issue. There's a crime-offender guidelines — it's a heightened penalty if you're convicted of a number of previous drug or violent offenses. There's a guideline on sexual cases, conduct that needs review. There are a growing number of cases dealing with immigration and illegal entry into the country — people who are deported and come back and subject to criminal penalties. People complain about the severity of the drug penalties all across the board. There are the kinds of issues we're likely to take up.

Q: Is the commission responsive to changing social values and mores?
A: I think the commission tries to be responsive to law enforcement concerns in particular. Let's say all of a sudden a new drug is introduced into a community. We clearly need to respond to that by establishing a guideline structure. If, instead, though, it's representative in Congress, think that there is a

particular emergency they try to pass laws to increase penalties for those offenses, and we try to be responsive to directives from Congress.

One example is Lottery. We did the massive study of the chemical qualities, the dangers of the drug, its impact on local communities, and then made a decision as to what would be the appropriate penalties.

Q: We've talked about drugs. What about other types of crimes?

A: We have book-theft/robbery convictions. There's fraud. We increased the penalties for white-collar offenses very dramatically since they've been on the commission. They were fairly low. From 10 years, the commission had done a whole series of studies and increased the penalties for those white-collar offenses. And then fraud happened and Congress responded with much more increased penalties and agreed to increase penalties more, which we did. To that extent, we found ourselves responsive to Congress and public concern.

So that there's a lot of immigration. We have implemented a number of guidelines to dramatically increase the penalties for terrorism. There are issues as regard to child pornography and child exploitation — they're very dangerous crimes and we have responded with guidelines for those offenses. The other suggestion is future — future in possession of the guns in case of firearms in connection with drug transactions. ☐

Abuse BY DAVID

Jordan executive director of the non-profit Institute Collaborative of Children's County. In the past, she said, if DCF cases against parents resulted in a change of abuse or neglect, the case was often closed, which Jordan found "very frustrating."

Tony Shellen said, the state can conduct a family assessment to determine the level of risk facing the child. Obviously, if there are allegations of sexual abuse, the case is automatically investigated for possible criminal prosecution. But in other cases where the offense isn't criminal and/or the child isn't at high risk for further harm, the department has greater latitude for dealing with the complaint. Jordan suggests that this approach is far less costly and time consuming and better serves the interest of both the parent and the child.

Larkin Johnson said if even at Child Abuse Prevention system, the very DCF's move away from an adversarial approach is a huge improvement — whether it means giving families parenting classes, child care support, or at least counseling in substance abuse or mental health.

"If you have a family that's under so much stress that people are moved about their children, then let's just help that family," Johnson said, "instead of playing cops and robbers with them and

only staying involved if we can prove something against them or not."

But Vermont families aren't the only ones being targeted around child abuse. Employees working at DCF are those who are struggling to do their jobs with fewer people and resources — a situation that, Dole admitted last week, has resulted in "less a year and less" on the staff.

Recently Dole told the House Reporters last month that recent budget cuts to his department "had nothing to do with" his department's handling of the Ryan case, and that DCF "has not been compensated" by budget reductions.

But in an October 2 memo to all DCF employees, Dole sounded a very different note. In it, he outlined how the efforts to reduce personnel expenses in order to achieve the Douglas administration's goal of \$1 million in personnel savings have been taking a toll on his department.

"In making this plan, we have combated our goal of maintaining the impact on direct services to vulnerable Vermonters," Dole wrote. "Even with this goal in mind, we are now at a point where our reductions — even outside of the direct service areas — impact the ability of the department to function smoothly. We will be compromised in responsiveness and performance in many areas."

Those staff reductions, Dole added, will "reduce our ability to deliver timely, high-quality services to Vermonters." ☐

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Bridge of Sighs

With the Crown Point Bridge closed, residents take comfort in a tiny ferry

BY LAUREN OBER

It's 9 a.m. on a recent Friday morning, and Mike Matot and his two men crew on the Port Townsend ferry have already downed nearly a dozen cups of coffee and are working their way through a useful looking bag of maple-glazed donuts. An hour later, the guys stack on homemade cookies and serve Halloween candy gifts of gourmet ferry clients. While their doctors might cringe at the crew's morning diet, we can only *day* they're earned it.

In a regular year, the ferry service between Shoreham, Vt., and Thonondaga, N.Y., would have ended by now, but this isn't a regular year. Right now, the Port Ti's transportation services are critical, and the crew is keeping the ferry afloat. The boat is the only immediate fix to the crisis caused by the closing of the Crown Point Bridge. What is normally a quaint tourist ferry has now become the sole means for working people in this part of Vermont and New York to cross Lake Champlain.

On October 16, the New York State Department of Transportation and the Vermont Agency of Transportation made a joint decision to close the bridge that spans the lake between Crown Point, N.Y., and Champlain, Vt. Citing catastrophic poor failures, they deemed the bridge unsafe for travel and consequently shut it down, even for foot traffic.

The bridge once accommodated about 1800 cars per day.

While both states share ownership of the bridge, maintaining the span is ultimately New York's responsibility. It is Vermont's obligation to keep up the bridge at Crown Point, the other car-carrying segment owned by the two states.

To say that residents on both sides of the lake were taken by surprise would be a gross understatement. Many use the bridge to travel to and from work every day, and most had little, if any, knowledge the structure was in such regular Crown Point commuters scrambled to find transportation alternatives. For many, that meant facing the prospect of an exhausting 300-mile detour that takes them around the south end of the lake.

Matot and his cable ferry spend many people the

long detour. By remaining open and extending his hours, the 41-year-old Winoch, Vt., man has become a hero to untold numbers of local workers. In the past two weeks, he's come to rely on him and a 16-ton tugboat named *Adèle B*.

The Port Ti ferry is a sweet old gal, with the appearance of an old. A ferry service has operated in some capacity at this crossing since 1798, making it one of the oldest ferry operations in business today. In the early days, a double-ended sailing schooner ferried folks across the water. Today, travelers cross the half-mile on a cable-guided steel barge pushed by *Adèle B*.

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Bridge of Sighs and

no longer any traffic on Route 15, which leads right to the bridge, and the area feels deserted. "Walking down 15 it's like a ghost town," Devine says.

Laurie Poskalis owns that general store where Devine's wife used to work. She watched her business plummet by 75 percent. The general store relied primarily on bridge traffic — people who would stop in for gas or a drink on their way in or from work. Now, Poskalis says, locals just come in to help her out. They feel bad for her.

Despite the burden of shuttling 300 cars across the lake daily — up from about 100 before the closing — Metel and his crew maintain their sense of humor. Inside the tug's cabin, Metel, deckhand Terry Norris, and 7-year-old Porter, who has been the ferry's captain for 42 years, poke fun at each other and marvel at how secure this bridge situation appears to be.

Metel grabs a short brown wig and eggs on Porter, whom the boys call Pope, to put it on. Apparently, one of the ferry regulars bought the wig for the balding captain at a yard sale. Porter, a slight fellow with a white cloth strap beard, roasts and plays the wig on his head. The crew have a laugh at Porter's expense before they exit the cabin and help the vehicles disembark.

Later on Bridge, Bob Dedrick, the

Twinsburg town supervisor, visits Metel. He's come to see how the ferry and his crew are holding up.

Dedrick's perspective on the situation is unique. Every day, he says, residents call to tell him they got laid off, or their business is dying, or they can't afford the extra childcare they need with the longer commute. He's heard from a few people who left their homes and rented apartments on the Vermont side so they wouldn't lose their jobs. Others are having trouble making their duplex or career treatment because they can't get to the other side of the lake. A handful of people have taken matters into their own hands by crossing in kayaks or canoes.

But surprisingly, transportation authorities advise against this. Dedrick, who is scheduled to leave his supervisor position in two weeks, says he won't show his fellow townspeople how to stay at night. He knows there's little he can do to help them. "It just tears your heart right out of your body," Dedrick says. "Quality of life has dropped drastically."

The two state transportation authorities agree that finding stable alternatives to the bridge is a top priority. During community meetings, those affected by the closure lamented that a solution be used within the Green Point Community Forest corridor. "We need to establish something quickly" agrees Reeves of the VDOT. "We need to get on close to the bridge as possible."

Currently, the two states are



investigating the prospect of a ferry service that would cross at nearly the same point as the bridge. This will take time, Reeves says, since it will require the building of new docks and roadways taking traffic to the current route.

In the longer term, the states are looking at building a temporary two-lane bridge, but that would take at least three months to construct. It would not be able to carry the 3500 cars a day the current bridge did before it closed, but it would be a better fix than asking the Port

To ferry 10 miles away or detour hours out of the way.

For now, the best option for people in Essex County, NY, and Addison County, VT, is Metel and his ferry. His job is punishing, but certainly not daunting. The thousands of coffee and bagel treats suggest his community efforts have not gone unnoticed. Until the two governments craft a more lasting solution, Metel will keep powering up the Addie & so that everyone gets across the lake. ☺

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g Get a comment on this story or a suggestion for another email? Contact Lauren Ober at lauren@montpelierpost.com.

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Feedback 409

drunk driving, is help to drive. They're not drunk, so why should they drive?

If I've seen drunk want to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem, then you are the stop enabling the trouble.

John T. Finn
MINNOCCE

CONSUMING THOUGHTS

Thanks to Ken Peres for his profile of my book and an in-depth debate between me and PHIL McKERRON on consumption and the environment in "Rise and Fall of Consumerism." Overall, the article did a good job of at least getting the conversation going, but in the end it seemed to give "the last word" to Bill without giving me a chance to respond. There seemed to be an awkward digression by Bill that I would refer to as a "global level" but only with "ideas and images." My basic point is that we have to think of livelihoods, given constraints of ecosystem and demography — I wish there were images that could feed people and improve food systems. There is not a single example of a country that has been able to develop without global trade flows, neither economies like Cuba that many of my friends on the left often champion could not be functional without outside resources. Of course, we need to keep the pressure on corporations to ensure that trade is fair, but to isolate ourselves is a bad idea both for the environment and for the economy.

Regarding Wilsen's impact on local employment, there are many methodological problems in studying this issue due to issues of "endogeneity" — the chicken and egg problem. Does Wilsen reduce wages, or does Walmart move to communities where wages are declining in any case? Studies are all over the map on this matter, and if you look at the global perspective, jobs with such multinational overall increase (perhaps more in the developing world where there are most desperately needed and where there are fewer social safety nets). The bottom line is that, as responsible environmentalists, we need to be pragmatic about our decisions not just in terms of our local community, but in planetary context as a world full of misery and discontent. Let's work toward the common goal of a better world that is not threatened by technological progress but helped by human innovation effectively toward solving our environmental and economic challenges.

As for J.P. Schumacher's book *Small Is Beautiful* that our readers suggested to me for reading — I have indeed read the book in detail and his message has value in cases where there is relatively low population

and inequality (which is not the case in our world). Also, I would suggest that the readers reflect the subtitle of his book, "Economics as if people mattered." Indeed, that is what I am aiming for as well. "Economics and Environmentalism as if People Mattered."

Saleem H. Ali

Ali is associate professor of Environmental Planning and Asset Analysis at UTM's Bahen School of Environment and Natural Resources

"VENTURE" FARTHER

It was very exciting to read "A Taste for 'Nourish'" (October 21). It's good to get the word out about all of the exciting and important work that is being done to build the foundation of local business development combined with local food enterprise. However, since the LACE Community Kitchen was not mentioned in the article, I'd like to take this opportunity to let you readers know about it.

LACE — the Local Agricultural Community Kitchen — is centrally located in downtown Kerr, and has a number of community-building and economic development initiatives that are designed to "flavor" together people, farms and food. Our Community Kitchen is a licensed processing facility and, even so, we are getting fully equipped; we have five producers who utilize our kitchen regularly, and we can accommodate many more. Our kitchen is an open space facility for those just barely starting out, or who are further along in their business development.

In addition, a unique aspect of the LACE Community Kitchen is that we host cooking and nutrition classes for all ages, and have plans to help farmers develop value-added products. Business and product development assistance is provided through our partnership with Central Vermont Community Action Council's *Wine a Business Development Program*.

Community Kitchen and Business Incubator Kitchen are planning to be a vital element in economic development and local food production for Vermont. I encourage anyone interested in learning more about LACE and our Community Kitchen to call myself or Jill Dorian at 802-426-6278. We love to give tours and show the ways we can help meet food processing needs.

Arvid Zeeva

Zeeva is executive director of the Local Agricultural Community Kitchen in Kerr.

CONNECTIONS: In our story last week, "Handbook Architect Celebrated in the 'Shored Square,'" we erroneously stated that Frank Lloyd Wright designed the Workforce Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif. In fact it was his son, Lloyd Wright.

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Sword Play

Channeling the ancient samurai in a new Burlington fitness class

BY LAUREN GIER

If samurai warriors existed today, Stephanie Shohet would definitely make the cut. She has the swords, the fearless attitude and a pair of rippling biceps that make her seem far more menacing than she is. All she needs is a tatoo and an elaborate suit of armor, and she'd be all set.

But we live in the 21st century, and the samurai class in Japan was abolished almost 40 years ago. These warriors no longer lance, doo-doo, and thump their katana. So the best Shohet can do is play at being a samurai, and profit while doing it. She's Vermont's only certified instructor of *Peris*, which takes elements of samurai swordsmanship and turns them into an hour-long, kick-butt burning workout.

Not long ago, I spent one of Shohet's *Peris*, which features a photo of her in a samurai pose wearing a black and red headband emblazoned with the word "Warrior." I was intrigued by the idea of learning how to wield a sword, even if it was just a cheap wooden one. I mean, who doesn't want to play at stabbing people? I saw *Kill Bill*, I can imagine how thrilling it would be to run someone through with a cold sliver of steel.

The problem is, I hate group fitness classes. I can hardly stifle my laughter as people bounce around in front of the audio source to loud electronic jams. And I'm hardly coordinated enough to follow the instructor. In the few such classes I have taken, it's a miracle I never pitched myself headfirst into the mirror.

But the fact that *Peris* is about swordsmanship somehow overrode my shyness for the idea of Jannetone, Zumba, Tai Chi and

whatever the workout du jour is now. *Peris* isn't a martial art, per se, but it's a fitness class that works on cardio, muscle building and coordination. After a few sessions, you may feel fully capable of slicing and dicing an opponent, however unlikely that situation may be.

Peris was developed three years ago by an Italian woman named Diana Montagna. The program has been around nationally for a few years, popular at exclusive gyms such as Equinox and Greenwich, but since Vermont doesn't have those, it didn't make its way to the state until Shohet found it.

The 37-year-old Colchester mother of two eight sons is a wildly confident no-nonsense fitness class involving swords, albeit wooden ones. While Shohet did become a certified personal trainer years ago, she set aside that career when getting closer to a state where a state short on gym slots proved difficult. Now, during the day, Shohet works as a bookkeeper at a convenience store and occasionally staffs the

register when the place is short-handed. She is also a caretaker for special needs children.

When Shohet discovered *Peris*, it was like she had found her true calling. She bought every DVD Montagna made, determined to get as sculpted as the Italian, whose back is a rippling column of muscle. "I saw her back, and I was like, 'I want that,'" Shohet says. "I threw myself into *Peris*."

The sword workout has been life-changing for Shohet. She stands straighter and exudes confidence. It has helped her focus better; she says she can't say enough about the program — and not just because she teaches it. "I carry myself differently now," she says.

In short, Shohet has become an apostle of *Peris* — and her devotion is endearingly evident in her efforts to get the word out. She's posted fliers like the one I saw all over Burlington. Shohet has put to use any money from her passion — the \$10 fee she charges for her once-weekly classes goes to rent the space at the North End Studio. While the classes' numbers aren't huge yet, a handful of loyal students keeps her motivated, she says.

Shohet bills the class as "no sweat, long for your back!" And after reaching for water on her back during one of her *Peris* classes last week, I would agree with that assessment.

The North End Studio is a machine space that smells of incense and is covered in Japanese-style wall hangings. At the beginning of class, Shohet removes her hoodie to reveal two full arms of tattoos, the newest of which depicts a woman swinging a samurai sword. Under a shimmer-plate-suede design of a flying Pegasus on her chest are pieces the size of pinkie knuckles. The girl alone is enough to make Shohet mesmerized, but the added muscle mass makes her someone you would like to wrestle with.

The class begins with a few basic moves — half cuts and full cuts to the rhythm of an hour music. Shohet reminds the seven of us to use our backs to lift the sword, not our arms. Right now, I'm happy if I can keep the 2-and-a-half-foot, 5-pound sword in my hands without it flying off and impaling my neighbor.

SWINGING A SWORD DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT HARD UNTIL YOU'VE DONE IT NINE OR 10 OR 20 TIMES IN A ROW. THEN IT STARTS TO HURT. BAD.

Stephanie Shohet

Bringing a sword doesn't seem all that hard until you've done it once or 10 or 70 times in a row. Then it starts to hurt. And Shohet sounds as if it's little baring is good. Ten minutes in, and I feel like someone lit a match inside my deltoids. "I wouldn't want to work your torso," Shohet shouts to me through her sword. "You'll thank me someday!"

Shohet's heavy ponytail sweeps across her shoulders as she demonstrates proper slinking technique. In forms, it's all about your core. Your trunk is what makes the sword stop and start, not your

limbs. Bergeim, who runs the North End Studio, knows that to be true. When he begins taking Shohet's class in March, he was confident and out of shape, he says. After the first few classes, he was so sore he could barely get out of bed. Now he looks like a samurai, minus the samurai helmet and body armor. "It's really made a difference," Bergeim says. "I'm an absolute believer in this stuff."

Three quarters of the way through the class, all I can think about is how sore I will be the next day. Sure enough, the following morning I feel like I got



Shohet going on her morning run

arise. But when you have the like keep coming, there's a little challenge.

Soon Shohet is adding squats, lunges and pivots to the sequence. And here is where I get lost. Thankfully, there are other people in the class who haven't a clue. Half of us are flinging our swords around like spinning tops, while the others look like they could do some serious damage.

As the class progresses, Shohet belittles offhandedness meant to inspire us. "You can do it. Just be a machine!" Just seeing those words. It'll be over in no time. "The wider your shoulders are, the more narrow your hips will look." The class laughs through its collective pain.

During a water break, new student Angela Porter dabs the sweat from her brow and tries to catch her breath. "My arms are like Jell-O," she says. A Porter regular sprints her 5K for cancer

runs. But when you have the like keep coming, there's a little challenge. And you want to know. It's a good thing I don't have to do anything more physical than type for my job, or else I'd have to take the day off.

But despite my soreness, I already have a sense of empowerment. Otherwise my class expressed the same sentiment, especially the women. There's nothing like swinging a sword to make you feel like you can overcome any obstacle, crush any opponent. ☺

For Tai Chi classes see how Mondays, 7 to 8 p.m., and Thursdays 8 to 9 p.m., at North End Studio 230 North End Avenue, Burlington. \$10. www.flynncenter.com. www.spot.typepod.com

Quest a comment? Contact Lauren Clee at lauren@flynncenter.com



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In some places, parents who don't like the looks of the local public or private send their kids to catholic school, private ones, or they homeschool. In Vermont, a third option is surprisingly popular. Starting your own.

That's what Tal Birdsey did in 2001 when he opened the North Branch School in Ripton. It's one of five small, independent schools in Addison County alone. Birdsey has chronicled that experience in a humorous and touching new memoir, *A Room for Learning: The Making of a School in Vermont*, which was published in September.

Vermont is known as a liberal, let's-a-thousand-flowers-grow-policy toward independent schools. In fact, it seems almost dangerously easy to start one. Three months before the beginning of the school year, prospective principals send file with the state an outline of their curricula, a description of how they'll perform annual student evaluations and a statement that the school will be in session for about 175 days. They must submit to a list of "inquirers," but these are little more than a bunch of promises — to, say, take attendance, have teachers and materials to carry out the educational program, and provide a building that meets state and federal codes.

As Birdsey reveals, that paper pushing is a more worn-out way for the logistical challenges that follow. It's easy to promise to have a suitable building, but much harder to find one, especially in a small town like Ripton.

It's also easy to promise to have teachers and books, but much harder to get anything more than a box of donated "text" of date encyclopedias, history textbooks, and tattered, marked-up copies of *Crane* and *Poundstone* and *Lord of the Flies*, Birdsey writes. And you can assume you'll have an eager crop of students, but at times something akin to a political campaign to persuade parents to entrust their kids to an institution with no track record.

At his book signing, it all worked out for Birdsey, 46, and the North Branch School. Slow a no-brainer, it has 17 students in seventh through ninth grades and three full-time teachers. They're uncoached behind a grow of trees in a woodhouse with shiny concrete floors

and walls made of Haddamite, where the students' artwork and writing are tacked up for all to see. There are separate rooms for humanities (Birdsey's area), math and science, and the basement holds the art department. Outside, a flagstone patio opens up a soccer field nestled against the forest. Tuition is \$4000 per year, with a little financial aid available.

Of course, it didn't start out like this. Birdsey's memoir chronicles the school's first few, sometimes rocky years. North Branch began as an idea hatched in the

give my children — my gift to them and to the future," he writes.

The idea espoused at that first Ripton meeting resonated. Birdsey of Ripton, he says, where parents were always hanging around the school, and students called the teachers by their first names. At the middle school, in particular, the classes met in a circular table so the students could face one another. They often expounded on their own experiences. The curriculum reflected a belief that adolescents are at the cusp of social and emotional independence from



The Art of Teaching Adolescents

The founder of Ripton's North Branch School remembers its growing pains

BY KIRK KARDASHIAN

Ripton Community House in November 2000. The parents and teachers who met there agreed that they were satisfied with Ripton Elementary School, which had about 60 students, but they weren't crazy about sending their kids to the regional middle school in Middlebury. They thought a smaller community middle school — one that felt more like a family — would be a better transition to high school.

their parents, and that they can learn who they are by engaging openly with their peers. "That's what I wanted to bring here," Birdsey explains on a recent afternoon in his book-lined classroom, "a school where the kids were talking to each other and listening to each other all the time."

But he didn't even to Vermont was the plan to start a school. Birdsey was raised in Adams, where he attended Paines Union, from Earl through 11th, and then went to Middlebury College. Later, while teaching back in Adams, he spent five summers earning a master's degree from Middlebury's Bread Land School of English.

Birdsey relocated to Vermont in 1995, his two sons are now ages 15 and 16. They're both at the North Branch School this year.

By January 2001, he had become the headmaster of the pre-announced school. Over the next eight months, he signed up 30 students. Among them were a boy who couldn't read or write, a girl with extreme autism, and another girl who had been "homeschooled, self-schooled, or unschooled and had spent

THAT'S WHAT I WANTED TO BRING HERE — A SCHOOL
WHERE THE KIDS WERE TALKING TO EACH OTHER
AND LISTENING TO EACH OTHER ALL THE TIME.

TAL BIRDSEY, NORTH BRANCH SCHOOL

Birdsey was invited to the meeting because he had taught kids that age for 10 years at the independent Paines School in Adams, which was established in the early 1970s by a group of parents who sought a more informal and individualized curriculum for their children. Birdsey also had two small boys. The story at home did bode well that "a school, created from my hands and heart, was the greatest thing I could

half a traumatic year in the local middle school," he writes.

This group gathered in a rented farmhouse, transforming the living room into a classroom. With the addition of a wheelchair ramp, fire alarm and exit signs, the house met zoning regulations — and just in time, too. The town issued the certificate of occupancy on the first day of school 1911, "it was pitchy gloom!" Binkley writes, "dark, crapped, with only one window on the north side of the house . . . In the living room, our two plastic tables sat danger-

feelings they produced. He had three write about their parents and friends and siblings, read poetry by Langston Hughes and William Butler Yeats and books such as *Moby* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, and wrote to John Coltrane.

The common thread in these disparate materials was a strong connection to the students' lives, which Binkley would highlight at every possible opportunity. "It's got to be related to their life," he says, "or they're not going to relate to it. They're self-centered and narcissistic. That's just the way they are."

Binkley would compare the civil-rights movement and Martin Luther King Jr.'s philosophy to the challenges of adolescence. "The kids want to be recognized for the content of their character," he asserts, "but they're not even sure what that is yet."

As the school year wore on, two more students joined the class, meeting Binkley's goal of 12. — Chairman Mark's perfect number for learning, he notes. The new additions gave the school some momentum and helped convince the other 30 students it was a place with something to offer, Binkley recalls.

In the fall of the second year, he was notified that the rented farmhouse's septic system wasn't big enough to accommodate a school. Looking a piece of land just down the road from the elementary school came up for sale. North Branch borrowed money to buy it and erect a new building, using income salvaged from an old farmhouse. They moved in at the beginning of 2003.

During the school's formative first year, Binkley and parent weekly meals explicating what their children were doing all day. "It suddenly occurred to me, as I was telling people about the school, that it was a pretty interesting story," he says.

These events became the foundation of the book. Binkley says the scenes and dialogues, repeated in his memory, flowed out easily as he started to write. He got encouragement from local readers and author Bill McKibben, whose daughter attended the school, and who reviewed two drafts before Binkley submitted his manuscript to publishers.

Binkley cherishes that first year of discovery and experimentation, and believes that institutions tend to get ossified over time. "I once had a colleague who said, 'That, we should be having this school down every 12 years,'" he recalls.

But after creating a school from nothing, chances are Binkley will find better ways to keep things fresh. ☐



Ted Binkley

Books
1 *Review: Ted Binkley, The Making of a School: Our Journey by Ted Binkley, Ed. Mark Warren, 364 pages, \$14.95.*
2 *Get a comment?* Contact Kim Kunkin at kunkin@montpelier.com or www.montpelier.com.

ously close to a cost-free woodland."

Hoping to score some supplies on the cheap, Binkley and the science teacher, Rita Warren, paid \$500 to subscribe to a "seconds" supply and equipment club, which entered members into a lottery for tools and equipment. "When the first lot came," Binkley writes, "Eric and I popped into it like greedy children under a Christmas tree. Out came a host of 1800 extra small latex gloves . . . seven spare bicycle tires . . . and a diverse collection of nuts, bolts and washers, none of which connected to any other."

But the school was more than a ramshackle building near the North Branch River outfitted with makeshift equipment. What Binkley recalls is the chemistry among the students and their ability to loosen up and start talking. Richly remembered scenes in the book describe these first days, and moments from the rest of the year. Binkley often asked the students to talk about their experiences and the

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Single Serving

Why Vermonters are mad for the humble cupcake

BY ALICE LEVITT

Where a nation of individuals. With tastes and lives as varied as the tasty treats on offer, sometimes you just don't want to share dessert. Enter the cupcake. The fun-sized confection has been gaining popularity ever since "Sex and the City" glamorized digging into the childhood treat at Magnolia Bakery. That spot in NYC got another push when Andy Samberg and Chris Pennell of "Saturday Night Live" threatened to "eat up Magnolia and crush on some cupcakes" in their 2005 viral video "Lary Smiley."

By 2006, cupcakes were so trendy they had already spawned a backlash, leading *Time* magazine's Joel Stein to assure readers, "There's nothing inherently wrong with the cupcake. Just like there's nothing inherently wrong in the Rucers." While campaigning for president the following year, Hillary Clinton offered on Letterman, "Each year on my birthday everyone gets a cupcake."

The cupcake is big business in its own, too. Last week on *Reception*, a search for the word resulted in 21,888 results, from 30-cent gift tags to a \$4,000 dinner designed to make the viewer's face appear in a giant, sparkly blob of frosting.

Of course, trends tend to move a little later in the 503. Some may even think a state known for its health consciousness is no place for a frivolous mini-dessert craze. Think again.

While northern Vermont has no equivalent of Magnolia Bakery, cupcakes have quietly made inroads on the traditional cake market. Andy Spaulding of South Burlington-based Angels Cakes specializes in wedding cakes, but she



Courtesy of Cakes & Creamery LLC for Cupcakes

says that in the last year cupcakes have accounted for a quarter of her orders. She attributes this to a recent trend of events that "seemed to be more about getting together as a family and not having a lavish party." Cupcakes, Spaulding speculates, "seemed to fit in with that idea of being playful."

They appear to thrive on the Internet, too. Local cupcake enthusiasts are prone to selling their wares online—with snazzy winking photos, of course—and showcasing their baking experi-

fall-time employee at South Burlington's Dymopower Corporation says she "didn't really learn how to bake" until she started making cupcakes. But the novelty of working on new flavors kept her going, she adds. Right now, My Little Cupcake's ever-growing menu boasts 40 varieties. Truitt's favorite? "Maple walnut brown. People either get it or they don't. They either make the face like 'That's gross,' or they're intrigued and excited about it."

While Truitt gets a couple of online orders a week, she says, she does most

My Little Cupcake

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The coordinator for Flynn/Arb and School Programs fills her confection orders Thursday through the weekend—and, she says, "Every Thursday night I just can't wait to go home to bake."

Both Lowell and Truitt are members of the Martha Stewart Cupcakes Club, an international online group of 70 dessert bloggers who once a month bake the same recipe, blog about it and compare notes. Members can also post their pictures on the club's Flickr page. "People really become obsessed with baking," says Lowell. She recalls a fellow blogger who led a countdown to the unveiling of her new pink Kitchen Aid mixer, craving about the appliance, "I have a new baby girl get ready to meet her!"

In the past month alone, Lowell has been asked to make cupcakes for a wedding—she surrendered the traditional white cake with an arrangement of minkie mousseline sandwiches—and a surprise 80th birthday party for a couple

SINGLE SOURCES: 36/36

SOME MAY THINK A STATE KNOWN FOR ITS HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS IS

NO PLACE FOR A FRIVOLOUS MINI-DESSERT CRAZE.

THINK AGAIN.

ments on blogs. Michelle Truitt, owner of the Woodbury home-bakery startup My Little Cupcake, first got interested in decorating mini-cakes after reading a feature on the subject in *Martha Stewart Living*. Then she discovered a blog called Cupcakes Take the Cake, run by Rachel Kramer Bussel, who has a day job as a noted source writer and sex columnist that "got me totally addicted to everything cupcakes," says Truitt, who now admits to sleeping in cupcake pajamas and sporting cupcake jewelry.

The former army cook and current

of her business at the farmers' markets in Williston (where she started selling cupcakes that year) and Woodstock. She doesn't know if further expansion is in the cards, pointing out that "with the research and testing that I do, it's probably like another full-time job for me." Preparation for the Williston Farmers Market alone takes about 10 hours each week.

It was through their mutual cupcake admiration that Truitt met Suzanne Lowell of Hinesburg, who runs a catering company called Let Them Eat Cake.

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Fermenting Community

Flack Family Farm makes kraut with a little help from some friends

BY LAUREN DIER

It's dinnertime chopping time at Flack Family Farm, and Katy Bauer and Mary Teascher are getting into it. With expertly sharp steel knives, the women hack off the rotten bits of the Aqua suboles and slice the vegetables into chunks the size of cucumbers. These pieces get tossed in a bucket in the middle of the long cutting table.

Though the sky is gloomy, it looks like the weather is going to hold, at least over the flowering farms. That's good for Bauer and Teascher, whose volunteer experience would be significantly dampened by a downpour. The pair, along with three other volunteers, are set up at cutting boards on a table on Doug Flack's porch, where they'll keep chopping, rain or shine. Despite that, the sky opens up and the crew's hat is caught in the rain.

Once the bucket of dillseed is full, Viktor Zog, one of Flack's three employees, passes it to Lori Neiderhiser, who is staffing the Robert Coombs II Ultra shredder. Neiderhiser drops the dillseed into the machine, which spits out neat slivers of cream-colored radish. The slivers are tossed in the basement of Flack and his wife Barbara's red chipboard farmhouse, which is where the magic happens.

Well, it's not as much magic as it is science. For the past 10 years, Flack's stock is made barbeque into fermented vegetables such as sauerkraut, kimchi and a dillseed/cabbage/paper mix. The 67-year-old farmer was talking about fermentation long before it became the rage in the health food world.

Flack's food is "alive," he says, and therefore all the better for you. The six-week fermentation process yields five light-brown pickles and sauerkraut, for some good bacteria found in yogurt. Lacto-fermented vegetables aren't



the 60-plus-acre family's only product. Flack milks a herd of American Milking Drees, raises grass-fed beef and pork, and harvests medicinal herbs for teas. But he's known best for his Flack Family Farm organic, fermented vegetables, which are sold at food co-ops around the region.

Making sauerkraut, kimchi or, on this October day, the dillseed mix is laborious. Each cabbage and radish is hand-cut before it is shredded. Once it's shredded, it's dumped in a vat with an additive of ginger and Celtic sea salt, stirred by hand and pounded with a 2-and-a-half-foot mangelwood pestle to release the vegetables' juices.

Since Flack is making a ton of the fermented vegetables this year, it's impossible for him to manage it all, even with the help of Zog and his other two employees. So Flack does what people need to do when they needed help with harvesting or processing — he asks his neighbors. But nowadays, "neighbor" is a broad term.

Every year since he began making the fermented vegetables, Flack has solicited volunteers to help with the production by word of mouth, on the Internet and at local food events. Those who show up get to learn how to make

their own sweatshirt and khakis, and Flack needs his production demands. Volunteers who put in a full day of work—generally 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.—leave with a five-gallon bucket of fermented vegetables they helped make.

It's a good trade-off for volunteers Bester and Teasdale, who drove up from Shoshone to learn the lacto-fermenting process from the master. Both say they've known about Flack's volunteer

to go," Flack says. "Our neighbors turned out to be the best teachers and helpers."

At the moment, the best helpers are the cadre of volunteers assisting Flack with his production. After slicing dillweed, Bester and Teasdale head down to the basement, where Nick Gehen is waiting to teach them how to pound the mixture. Gypsy folk music blares as Gehen throws handfuls of chunky, gray sea salt and ground ginger into bag, blue

chiffon, they come for the community. Naderer, of Fairfield, decided to help out as a way to meet other people. "I was always rapping about how there was no community up here anymore. So I figured I better do something about it rather than talking about it," Naderer says as she runs dillweed through the Robot Coupe.

Had Carrie Kittell-Mitchell, of Sheldon, never volunteered at the Flack

potatoes, cooked carrots and onions, week, cucumber salad, the dillweed mix and some late season watermelon. The only thing that Flack didn't grow or raise was the brown rice. That spared a conversation about the politics of food eating and the contemporary agricultural system.

Flack is a slight man with a reddish, wind-whipped face and hands scarred from years of work. His family grew plums as more bumpy than farmer. He sits at the head of the table looking superior, dispensing wisdom gained during his 20 years spent farming and living in a rural community. He sounds off about the link between the degraded agricultural system and the growing national health crisis. He quotes Thomas

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Channing Brown and his Great Dane weighing out cabbage; Vicki Zay, Carrie Kittell-Mitchell and Nick Gehen cutting the community apple.

PHOTO BY GUY AUSTIN

VOLUNTEERS WHO PUT IN A FULL DAY OF WORK — GENERALLY 8 A.M. TO 3 P.M. — LEAVE WITH A FIVE-GALLON BUCKET OF FERMENTED VEGETABLES THEY HELPED MAKE.

production days for a while and wanted to check them out.

Flack recognizes that when volunteers leave the farm with the skills to reproduce his process in their own kitchens, he's essentially losing customers. But it's part of spreading the gospel of lacto-fermentation. "We must a lot of people, and we spread the idea that you can be in charge of a lot yourself," Flack says. "It's sending away a customer, but the real effect is, you build community. You educate people and you educate yourself."

Flack, who has a PhD in ecology and botany, came to the farm in 1978 after working for six years in New Zealand protecting rare birds. That experience inspired him to enter the farming life. He chose Vermont because of its biodiversity and its reputation for being a low-and-let-live type of place, he says.

While he built his house, his family lived in lean-tos and tents. They were unconventional, but in the mid-1970s, Flack recalls, such constructions were embraced. "People were very receptive

harris of purple and white cabbage and dillweed. The pungent tang of fermenting cabbage is heavy in the air.

Gehen tells Teasdale to grab some rubber kitchen gloves and start mixing the ingredients into a slow Coupe the barrel's contents are sufficiently blended, each woman takes a wooden paddle, which she's instructed to mash into the vegetables. The paddle is clogged-like and slightly intimidating.

Gehen, a storeowner by trade, explains that the dillweed mix requires less pounding than sauerkraut to release its juices. Bester and Teasdale raise their paddles and plunge them into the mix, over and over again. "It's definitely a workout," says Bester, who works at Champlain Orchards and is no stranger to physical labor.

Mixing lacto-fermented vegetables is no more complicated than that. The vegetables ferment in their juices for six weeks and are then transferred to jars and heated in cold storage. The product can last on the shelf for up to two years.

But volunteers don't come for the

farm, she probably never would have come in contact with someone like Zay, a 23-year-old nonconformist and self-described transfer who, with Gehen, is recovering a cabin not far from Flack's property. But as Zay cuts cabbage, her hands stained purple from the juice, he talks with Kittell-Mitchell about his plans for the cabin. Kittell-Mitchell, a youthful-looking grandmother, frets over whether Zay will be warm enough there during the long Vermont winter.

Kittell-Mitchell grew up on a dairy farm, though her family still operates a superstore, she misses this kind of camaraderie. The good conversation makes the work go quickly and reminds her of what she loves about rural Vermont. "It was just a calling to be here," she says. "You meet such interesting people."

Flack takes his job of fostering community one step further and feeds all his volunteers a heavy lunch around his own kitchen table. Nearly all of the food comes from the farm and is cooked by the always-on-duty Zay. On a recent production day, volunteers cooked on round

The assembled eat and listen to Flack, most likely to see what offers the volunteers to the farm. Working there gives a chance to learn a new skill, converse with others, participate in the rural economy and absorb the teachings of a man who seems to have it all figured out.

As soon as lunch is over, the workers pile their dishes around the kitchen sink and head back out to the porch to chop cabbage or mangle down to the basement to mash the dillweed mix. Zay and Flack's dog, Nico and Bester, who have been lounging in the frontyard, are happy the lunch has returned. They bring their tools and stiff around the compost buckets, more interested in their human companions than the spicy vegetables. The shudders him and the conversation resumes. The pile of cabbage in the bed of the truck grows smaller as another day on the farm steadily marches toward completion. ☺

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It's so simple. Lowell says: "It's almost like it's assembly line. You have your bags and bins and drop the frosting, sleep, bloom, bloom! I find my own way than trying cakes and doing them." Truett agrees, adding work on the three tiered cake also made for a coworker last year "no mistakes".

While cupcake batter is elevated to that of a sheet cake, halving the bag means it more than does the job. "I really really try to make them look really nice," says Truett. "I have this level that I want them to look as good as they taste." This is evident in each strawberry cut to miniature proportions and every perfectly placed chocolate dusting on her late-sized Neapolitan Dynamites — marble cakes with strawberry butterscotch that taste like the berry's very essence. Truett's other quirky varieties include Hot Chocolate and Donuts — a milk chocolate cupcake with marshmallow frosting and homemade mini donut on top — and Strawberry Daquiri, composed of strawberry, lime, and rum flavored cake topped with lime butter cream. She raises several veggie versions, so even better bakers can bite into a berry fat margarita or carrot cake delicacy.

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agony, whose wife asked for chocolate and vanilla cupcakes to accompany the single cake with maple cream.

"It's so simple," Lowell says. "It's almost like it's assembly line. You have your bags and bins and drop the frosting, sleep, bloom, bloom! I find my own way than trying cakes and doing them." Truett agrees, adding work on the three tiered cake also made for a coworker last year "no mistakes".

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A Delicate Rose wedding is evident in the confetti of Pam McCarthy, the primary cupcake baker at Cosmic Bakery and Cuff, the 36 Allston house the owner with her son Brian and Mike. As a child, McCarthy spent time on Broadway with her mother's cousin, who owned a bakery — in her own parents' front yard. Now the downtown her "substantially sized" cupcakes as evenings and weekends when she's not busy handling full service for the state Agency of Human Services.

In the springtime, these parties may be framed to resemble business and checks, last week, McCarthy's creations looked like witch's hats and pumpkins. At one wedding this summer, she personally shared Caramel chocolate curls for a slew of snowball-like, white chocolate-frosted cupcakes. These were paired with mini Strawberry Torte Towers, cupcakes split and filled with fruit from Black River Produce and Thompson Dairy whipped cream, which McCarthy notes as "just fabulous, very high in taste for."

After long hours at her stressful day job, McCarthy says her cupcakes as a way to "just play being the design piece is really a lot of fun for me" she says. Sharing being done with her grown sons — a "very rewarding" setup,



she says — she's crafted other shrunken desserts, including apple pie, cheese cake, and scones. Cosmic Bakery and Cuff also sells full scale cakes, card cakes, milk, and

But there's just something about cupcakes. (Really, one customer picked up 20 at once.) The ease of experimenting with tiny confections encourages customers to submit feedback and requests. Like Truett and Lowell, the McCarthy maintain a Facebook page for that purpose. "We talk about perfect for flavors they'd like to see," McCarthy explains. "It gives you a barometer."

Truett attributes the popularity of her cupcakes to "the cute factor" and ease of use. "You don't have to share, and you can just walk around with one, which you can't do with a piece of cake." Lowell notes all the usual explanations for the cupcake trend — "They're fun, they're cute, they're easy, they're bite-sized" — but she also notes the danger was always of that single serving. "People who are on a diet will say, 'What's a little cupcake going to hurt me? It's not like a piece of cake.'" A single cupcake makes a cheaper alternative to a shareable dessert (Truett's costs are \$1.25 apiece) but spending more than that, in bulk, the smaller bites are "not the budget option."

Whether you consider them a gateway drug or edible art, cupcakes aren't disappearing anytime soon. They're an easy eating style in the desktop era, not just of Google, but of other local sites such as Microsoft and Bing in Burlington. All that's missing is a brick and mortar Vermont cupcake store.

Would such an establishment attract the loads of customers that Magnolia Bakery once drew in New York City? Spalding, who is closing Apple Cakes at the end of the wedding season, says she once considered opening such a store herself. "There is a place for it," she says. "I wouldn't be surprised if someone did it and had a lot of success."

Why might that person be? Perhaps a current past time cupcake crafter like Truett. "I've done some research," she says. "I think you'd have to have a perfect location. If it were on Church Street it could be huge." With any luck, lady buns in Burlington could get a lot easier.

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November 10, 2009
9 am - 1 pm

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Porter Medical Center, a community hospital located in Middlebury, VT, is seeking a part-time, 40 hour per two-week-pay-period, mid-level provider to work in our 14,000 visit per year Emergency Department in collaboration with 24/7 physician coverage. Emergency medicine experience preferred but not required. Qualified candidates must have current Vermont licensure as a Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant.

Porter Medical Center offers a competitive compensation and benefits package as well as the opportunity to join a hospital in a picturesque setting with a collegial staff that prides itself in delivering outstanding care to the patients we serve.

If you are interested in joining our team, please contact **David Fuller, Human Resources Manager, 802-388-8887, or by email at dfuller@portermedical.org.**

For more information on Porter Hospital please visit our website at www.portermedical.org



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Candidates must have a bachelor's degree or five years experience after high school and a valid driver's license with a reliable vehicle.

Completed interest cards will be considered for final candidates. Submit a resume by November 30, 2009 to:

The New School of Montpelier
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PART-TIME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES OF VERMONT, INC.

OPEN DOOR CLINIC

Community Health Services of Vermont, Inc. is seeking a Part-Time Executive Director for the Open Door Clinic, a community health center serving the needs of the homeless in the State of Vermont. The successful candidate will be responsible for the overall management of the clinic, including financial, administrative, and clinical services.

The Open Door Clinic is a community health center serving the needs of the homeless in the State of Vermont. The successful candidate will be responsible for the overall management of the clinic, including financial, administrative, and clinical services.

Qualifications: 3-5 years experience in a community health center, preferably in a leadership position. A master's degree in social work or a related field is preferred. The successful candidate will be responsible for the overall management of the clinic, including financial, administrative, and clinical services.

Responsibilities: Develop and implement the clinic's vision and mission. Oversee the clinic's financial, administrative, and clinical services. Represent the clinic in the community and to the public. Provide leadership and support to the clinic's staff.

Interested parties should send their resume to:

EarthTurbines, a highly skilled, experienced professional who is responsible for the overall management of the clinic, including financial, administrative, and clinical services.

Resumes should be sent to: earthturbines@earthturbines.com by November 20, 2009.

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EarthTurbines is a community health center serving the needs of the homeless in the State of Vermont. The successful candidate will be responsible for the overall management of the clinic, including financial, administrative, and clinical services.

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The Adams Center for Mind and Body, LLC
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EOE



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COTS provides emergency shelter, services, and housing for people who are without homes or who are marginally housed with the belief that housing is a fundamental human right.

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FAMILY CASE MANAGER – FULL AND HALF TIME

We are seeking Case Managers to provide full range of direct services to homeless families as they transition into housing. The successful candidates will exhibit a willingness to learn and to work with a range of clients including individuals with mental health, medical, substance abuse and employment issues. Previous experience with homeless population, crisis intervention and housing is desirable. BSW or a Bachelor's degree in a related discipline plus relevant work experience are required. We have both full and half-time positions open.

To be considered for these positions please send cover letter and resume to:

Jobs@cotsonline.org.

COTS
Human Resources
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Burlington, VT 05403-1616
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Human Resources Dept.
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michelle@sevendaysvt.com

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To Hell and Back

A chat with Squirrel Nut Zippers founder Jimbo Mathus
 BY DAN SOLLIS

Squirrel Nut Zippers exploded onto the mainstream in 1996 with the hit single "Hell," from their platinum-selling album *Live! The Main 10*. Well, it's pretty catchy. And despite a distinctive subject line, it doesn't lead to the forefront of the late '90s swing revival alongside contemporaries Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Royal Crown Revue, and Cherry Poppin' Daddies. (Sadly, SRZ actually played swing.)

Squirrel Nut Zippers perform with host Dan Solla Tuesday, November 16, at the Capital Grounds Ballroom, 5 p.m., \$50/35 AA.

Squirrel Nut Zippers went on hiatus in 2003 (reuniting for a run of three dates in 2009) from touring on the strength of an acclaimed new live album, *Live at the Main*, which appears to be back for the foreseeable future, and have landed a place for a new album of original material.

In honor of Squirrel Nut Zippers' High in the Clouds Ballroom performance, *Live at the Main* is the place where the road shows where it belongs.

SEVEN DAYS: You returned from hiatus in 2007 and toured a little bit. But it seems like the band is really back now with an extensive tour and the release of a new live album. Why get back together when you can?

JIMBO MATHUS: I think we were just excited to be in a world sound with so much distance between them and now it was such an intense project initially and we just needed a break. So I think we were

all just curious how it would sound to get back together.

SD: When you first really broke out, you were kinda lumped into the swing revival that was happening at the time. Did you feel that was accurate?

JM: Not so. We put ourselves together in Chapel Hill, NC, and so were the only ones doing anything like that around there. Then, once we went out to the West Coast, we saw there were a bunch of groups doing more of the swing sound. But we never really were swing. I mean, our be woooooah! I really always thought of us as more of a rockabilly act. We can't play swing. I don't think that is just word, because everything sort of came out at the same time. It was strange timing.

That was one instant we quit actually. It just seemed ridiculous. We wouldn't be at the start of a club and the week after we would be at a string of hundreds of shows. And the week before it would be some sort of question mark, and it just seemed odd.

SD: It never really seemed like a good description for you.

JM: I think it's just more a matter of timing. It just so happened there were other groups out there doing more actual swing-type music. But I think we broke the trail, if I'm not mistaken, in the so more commercial success for a lot of those groups — Brian Setzer Orchestra probably excluded. I think we were doing pretty good right around the same time we came out. But it was just more one of those career calendar-type events, you know? Things happen. But I don't think we'll ever see that again, do you?

SD: I don't know. Maybe not to that degree or on that scale.

JM: It was all because of a really good timing.

SD: Well, even getting in a position, you never knew.

JM: You never know.

SD: Andrew Bird was actually a member of the band for a while, right?

JM: Yes. He's an honorary member now. Katherine [Whitaker] found him playing fiddle for a Celtic singer at a hippie festival in North Carolina, up on the mountains, and brought him back to the tent. And he basically joined our band right then.

SD: It must be cool to see him here as such success as he's had.

JM: Yes. I've been so proud of him. It's great to see him do what he's been doing and see how great I mean. I was one of his early mentors. You know? As was Katherine. I'm very, very happy for him. He's a wonderful friend and a great collaborator. There are a lot of people I could have done without him.

SD: Tell me a little bit about the new live album.

JM: The band just sounds so much different. The songs are from our whole catalog, even the single we did on *Wings* [Winged Right, 1997]. Not, *Rollin' Backwards*, even the Chinese new record. So we do stuff from all of our releases. Some of those records we made in the mid and early 1990s. So we're all progressed on musicians and we sound a lot better, more mature. The songs are rearranged and rearranged. It sounds really cool, and we wanted to capture that while we had it. ☺



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FRI 11/06
 Liane Carroll & The Forest Floor • original/folk/acoustic

SAT 11/07
 Hagen Callahan • folk/funk/blues/soul/jazz

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To Hell and Back

A chat with Squirrel Nut Zippers founder Jimbo Mathus

BY DAN ROLLES

Squirrel Nut Zippers exploded into the mainstream in 1996 with the hit single "Hell," from their platinum-selling album *HELL*. The next year, well, obviously early. And despite a distinctive vulgar feel, it thrust the band to the forefront of the late '90s swing revival alongside contemporary Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Royal Crown Revue and Cherry Poppin' Daddies. (Travis Widespread played swing.

I know what Zippers perform at in Bristol. But this Saturday afternoon at the Newport Grand Casino is a gem. 5:00 p.m. AA

Squirrel Nut Zippers went on hiatus in 2003 (reuniting for a run of tour dates in 2009). Now touring on the strength of an increased new live shows, *HELL* and *HELL* the band appears to be back for the foreseeable future, and have landed at place for a new album of original material.

In honor of Squirrel Nut Zippers' High or Grand Oldtime performances, *Swing Days* chatted on the phone with co-leader Jimbo Mathus, who was on the road somewhere in Mississippi.

SEVEN DAYS: You returned from hiatus in 2007 and toured a little bit. But it seems like the band is really back now with an extensive tour and the release of a new live album. Why get back together when you can?

JIMBO MATHUS: I think we were just curious as to how it would sound with so much distance between then and now. It was such an intense project initially and we just needed a break. So I think we were

all just curious how it would sound to get back together.

SD: When you first really broke out, your entire lineup jumped into the swing revival that was happening at the time. Did you feel that was accurate?

JM: Not so. We put ourselves together in Chapel Hill, NC, and so were the only ones doing anything like that around there. Then, once we went out to the West Coast, we saw there were a bunch of groups doing more of the swing sound. But we never really were swing. I mean, our big smash hit, "Hell," it really always thought of as more of a rockabilly sort. We can't play swing. I don't think that it was just work, because everything sort of came out at the same time. It was strange timing.

That was one instance we quit actually. It just seemed ridiculous. We wouldn't be at the start of a club and the week after we would be at string orchestras of some stripe. And the week before we would be some sort of quasi swing thing, and it just seemed odd.

SD: It never really seemed like a good description for you.

JM: I think it's just more a matter of timing. It just so happened that there were other groups out there doing more actual swing-type music. But I think we broke the trail, if I'm not mistaken, in the so more commercial success for a lot of those groups — from *Swing Out Summer* probably included. I think he was doing pretty good right around the same time we came out. But it was just music out of those cover calendar-type events, you know? Things happen. But I don't think we'll ever see that again, do you?

SD: I don't know. Maybe not to that degree or on that scale.

SD: It was all just coming to a head.

SD: Well, everything is cyclical. So you never know.

JM: You never know.

SD: Andrew Bird was actually a member of the band for a while, right?

JM: Yes. He's an honorary member now. Katherine [Whitaker] found him playing fiddle for a Celtic singer at a hippie festival in North Carolina, up on the mountains, and brought him back to the tent. And he basically joined our band right then.

SD: It must be cool to see him here as such success as he's had.

JM: Yes. I've known a great deal of him. It's great to see him do what he's been doing and see him grow. I mean, I was one of his early mentees. You know? As was Katherine. I'm very, very happy for him. He's a wonderful friend and a great collaborator. There are a lot of people I could have done without him.

SD: Tell me a little bit about the new live album.

JM: The band part sounds so much different. The songs are from our whole career, even the single we did on *Wings* [Unleashed Right, 1997]. Not, *Rollin' Backwards*, even the *China* new record. So we do stuff from all of our releases. Some of those records are made in the mid and early 1990s. So we've all progressed as musicians and we sound a lot better, more mature. The songs are rearranged and rearranged. It sounds really cool, and we wanted to capture that while we had it. ☺



Game of Chance

Playing the lottery is no risky business. Now blowing a couple bucks on the occasional scratch ticket is essentially harmless. But if you're not careful, the danger is always there to become addicted, which can lead to a lifetime of more poverty than northwesterners are an unlikely amount of time spent in poverty blowing tickets and praying for that elusive big score—which you would think, of course, was to buy more tickets and maybe a Toyota. But all hell is loose. Panther giving the picture is the emphasis of losing the map looked out of you by someone who wandered into the store to pick up a half gallon of milk and is getting really tired of the process taking 20 minutes because you're holding up the front-line trying to choose between \$5 between \$5 Money Maker and \$10s. Better Life is really freakin' madmen, anyway, because you're just going to lose it and if you don't you're back to back to get the hell out of my way so I can pay for my milk and kids' lunches! "Fig. Chaf!" I might just even this time 2% go you—aloha, Koolhaas, Aloha, where is it?

Oh, right. The lottery. And it's still playing properly.

Of course, the reason the lottery is so popular is because gambling is fun. As a culture we gamble on anything and everything under the sun. Sports, politics, reality TV, catch your death, you name it. If it exists, the chances are good that someone has figured out a way to make money on it—I'd put the odds at 10:1, 3-to-2. But what about music?

If gambling on the arts seems totally intuitive, that's because it is. It is really difficult to quantify artistic endeavors, one for "Blue Heron" style non-potential, but that doesn't mean we can't try.

This Saturday the Monkey House in Wisconsin hosts the "Rock Lovers," presented by local Scream-outlet Interludium Music. Here's the gist:

Saturday morning, dozens of musicians will split up by instrument—drums, guitars, bass, vox, etc.—and placed into bands completely at random. Each group has given the day to come up with a four-song, 30-minute set consisting of one cover and three originals. The bands will meet at the Monkey House later that evening to

rock your socks off! Sounds like Sox, right? Right.

The best part is that all of the proceeds from the show will benefit the Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Program. The second best part is that the pool is the potential for hearing some really cool new music for the first time. It's totally possible—likely, even—that one or more of the performing bands will totally rock. And there's the rub. Though working at concert venues is a kind of a pretty pleasant right? Plus, gambling on which bands will rock and which ones won't could make for a pretty better past. Not that I would ever consider such whimsy.

Musician interest in participating can contact Matthew Hines at mhines@monkeyhousemusic.com.



Aloha, Koolhaas

Today Is Your Birthday

It's hard to believe, but today is on some 9 years old the weekend. They just grow up so fast, don't they?

The fun part is that Saturday the young collective will celebrate in grand style with an all-day birthday bash featuring just about every local band in town. And if you think it's playing close to that, but you've obviously never been to the party. I dare you to name a good 10 bands that isn't playing.

The fun part is that Saturday is 6 a.m. But don't let the early start time dissuade you from attending. The coffee is free! Scream—emphasis on "free"—all day long!

Laser Tag

Last week as I was publishing my daily column about the upcoming 8.5th of June event, a reader responded to me outside of the city and asked if I knew what was going on with DOCTORMARTIN's guitar solo PET TOURNET's solo played BLUES AND LASERS because they hadn't heard anything from the band as a whole. Funny enough, neither had I!

In a weird cosmic coincidence the next morning an email popped up in my inbox from Tournet, outlining everything BL has been busy up to the last few months. And at times they've been busy.

In addition to appearing at Gathering of the Vibes and WoodFest this summer, the band has been hard at work on a follow-up to last year's self-titled debut. Tournet does the new effort—which is reportedly in the mastering phase at the moment—represents a more collaborative effort among band members JIMMY HINES, GUY DUBOIS, JOHN HOGGINS, and MATT HINES. Tournet writes that he's been hard at work releasing creative control over the group, but that the results may work it. He goes on to say that BL feels more like a "rock band," thus finally has put project.

This Friday, Hines and Lazen make a welcome return to live performance at Club Monocine. Although they won't have the disc in hand at the show, they will play the album in its entirety.

What's Goin' Down?

The ongoing fight between Israel and Palestine is one of the more debated—and confusing—conflicts in the world. Opinions on the subject vary widely and are passionately held. This is a volatile subject, so I'll withhold my own except to say that this matter of war, I tend to side with HUMANITY. SPOILER: Nobody's right if everybody's wrong.

Anyway, this Sunday at the Ukrainian House in Milwaukee a slew of excellent local musicians will perform a rare assortment of the current bests over the Green Steps in midtown. The money raised will be donated to support the U.S. band to appear on stage. AMARILLO, ATLANTIC, BURNING BRASS, BLUE BARRIQUADE, JUNE FIRE DISTRICT, PEARL HARBOR, SCORPION VOUGHT, and BANGIN' FRANK, and WIGGERS UNPLUGGED.

BiteTorrent

Musician is lighter weather. It's time for yet another benefit show, even though, well, there's no benefit and it's not like we're in a bind. Plus, you can't help but love without a fix, right? Anyway, this Saturday (finally!) I'll be back to the Sound Stage, a concert to benefit the W.T.C. "The Album Edition" which recently closed traditional fundraising operations due to a lawsuit with its landlord but continues to stream online. Rockin' for rockin' sake are THE HURRY RHYTHM, THE HURRY RHYTHM, DEEPFIVE, and more to get unannounced special guests.

242 Main is hardly known as a location of hip-hop. But that changes this Sunday to HURRYMOT. GTO Entertainment has an open three days celebrating the variety of hip-hop culture in VT entitled "The 5 Elements of Hip-Hop." The show features performances by a variety of acts who from the 100 scene, including BATTLE, HART THE PROFESSIONAL, MC GUSTO, STYL, WOODWORTH, HURRYMOT—put to name a few—as well as broadcasting the show from the BENTON HURRY crew and live graffiti demonstrations. And that's what's up.

This spot is THE HURRY crew's second show. Wednesday, November 8, show at Club Monocine which brings on those rappers rock. On the bright side, appears HUMAN FRANKIE and DJ DEEDY PHANTOM will appear as scheduled and promise to make a worth your while to attend while knowing of the possibility of public safety. Really?



Rock Tournet

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BLUES AND LASERS
FEELS MORE LIKE A
"REAL BAND"
THAN MERELY HIS
PET PROJECT.



MIN 89 (Y BURA AND THE APRIL FURIES) KUMAKE AND CONTRAST

Gone Fishin'

Kaps Mays is the embodiment of contrast. As a physician by day, she deals with the realities of life and death on a daily basis. As the leader of San Francisco's **BLIND AND THE APRIL FURIES** by night, the American-born, globally raised songwriter blends myriad world influences with distinctly American pop sensibilities. Her singular sonic aesthetic is both celebratory and elegiac. Tinkling behind her latest album *the Chordline* (carnal Cumbancha), *Blind Mays* (see review on page 55), the band springs through Vermont this Monday for an intimate show at Burlington's Pomus Main Stage.

FRI 10 p.m.

THE HENRIE HOUSE Veterans: Power 2nd PC
Nostalgia (int.) 5 p.m. \$5

BLIND WINTERS The Caves Brothers (presented
by) 8 p.m. \$5

NEIGHBOR'S John McVie (live acoustic show)
7 p.m. Free. Nostalgia (live acoustic show)
int.) 8 p.m. \$5

NEIGHBOR'S Phil in the House (live) 8 p.m.
Free

OLD SHED BAR & GRILL The Combos (live)
8 p.m. Free

PALMER MAIN STAGE John McVie (live)
7 p.m. Free. Nostalgia (live acoustic show)
int.) 8 p.m. \$5

BLIND WINTERS John McVie (live acoustic show)
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BLIND WINTERS John McVie (live acoustic show)
7 p.m. Free

THE SEVENTH WAVE The Caves Brothers (presented
by) 8 p.m. \$5

BLIND WINTERS John McVie (live acoustic show)
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int.) 8 p.m. \$5

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353 First Street of Church St.

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music

**Rupa and the
April Fishes,
*Este Mundo***

PLANNING FOR

Kings and the *April Fools* are a study in multiplicity. But they come from honestly. Born to Indian parents, California and raised in southern France, these women Kings knows have been recording seemingly divergent cultural influences her whole life. That her unique worldview has directly informed her approach to music is evident in the sprawling sounds found on her band's latest work, the appropriately titled *Life Mosaic* (21st Mar 04) released on Charlotte's Inner City/Compassion.

Eric Milne opens *Wax* with a robust show with the moody intro track "La Winter of" which sets almost as a contrast, offering glimpses of the multi-dimensional beauty of what is to come.

The shiny, glossy, flawed "C'est Moi" insert and introduction to the album's naming — and most powerful — theme. A doctor at a San Francisco hospital by day, Stipe is fascinated by the fragility of life, the unyielding inevitability of death and the life-beauty inherent in both. Here the poems in French — the multilingual songwriter rarely sings in English. But listeners will hardly mind the translation accompanying the lyrics as the album's inner notes-to-understand his meaning. His sublimed, almost fractious tones would be grossly overdone, even in his lyrics.

Though Kate Winslet will undoubtedly be the understudy "work" man in most retail outlets, she does exhibit a distinct Western pay bent, hinted at on the hands. Contrasts to deliver extraordinary features, and more fully-released here

La Lucha employs a mainstream reggae groove, maintained by soaring falsetto runs and aptly timed wailing deliveries. "Gospel the La Lucha" demands traditional sin beat and an unabashed pop-to-beach hook at the chorus. "Trouble" is a sly, sexy tune — sung in English — ending vocals filled with house and heartily risks.



most a staggering increase artistically demands. For example, the new designs in animation from a legend hailed as one of the greatest animators in "La Roca." On the spreading, cinematic

we conclude that an "Islamic heart"

With Eric Mundt, *Boys and the Girls*, Fishan has created a record that could—and should—appeal to a wide cross section of listeners, not merely those with an affinity for “world” music. That in itself is a feat. But what’s more impressive is how they’ve done it: by blurring lines between cultural influences without sacrificing the qualities that make each so unique. Or, in other words, by proving that “this was M” is truly not one word.

Catch Rupe and the April Weather at
Farmers' Market Starts this Monday

CONCLUSIONS

**Indecent Exposure,
Sleazy**

CALL BY CARRIER'S PREVIOUS
CREDIT ADVANCE

On their MySpace page, local rock outfit Indecent Exposure literally claim their latest album, *Theory*, sounds like "nothing you've ever heard before." As if that statement wasn't fraught with enough boldness to make their challenge all the more daunting with this periodic loss

There's fighter's move
Does Janny live up to its lofty billing?
Of course not. Rather, it sounds like a bunch
of things you've heard many, many times
before. "Vintage" edited and underscored,
the disc's 18 tracks read like a checklist of
every melody that has played rock music
in the last decade. But pay up, rock! Yip
Chevy sounds great! Hoochie 4 U! Good
loud rock electronic! And here, Sally, the
hot girl is on and on.



"Teen Age Love" opens prominently enough with a wall-of-sound guitar crunch. Outkast then lets their lead off to verse and chorale. Undoubtedly that tune — at the best of the album — goes long before it is even strongly tapping. And it's so heavily drenched by the time it returns to its main groove that the first two verses of the first track "The Way You Move" (featuring the DMX, if managed by Vanilla Ice and Koolha, and pushed into the right groove) track.

Whether they handle real stories on the next cut, "Mudbone Nothing," and unless some kind of needed angst and guttural piercings. Though the struggle with pitch — or maybe being too close — has proven to be a failure. And while the band's groove fully belated to be too perfect and, at best, elegant, it's also a bit of a disappointment. The first of the work. Unfortunately it is followed by the worst.

Over *Reactor X*, Chemical Frothies-late electro-metal, Jim Tye uncovers a painfully awkward, up-behind-the-ear as Education Connection TV commercial. I defy you not to snicker when he earnestly proclaims, "Come on, come on. Get up, get up. Yeah!" akin to such choruses like a "South Park" parody of Meatloaf's James Heaford.

The remainder of the album is... well, can we just talk about something else?



Don't I feel finding a little opening here. The bottom line is this: If you're tossed into a modern rock radio station in the last 10 years — hardly business of longevity to begin with — you've heard what I mean to offer. And you've heard or done much better.

Then again, maybe I've got it all wrong. Maybe the album is a lark, a painted herb or pop culture, and Underdog Exposure is the greatest satirizing since *Garage Inc.* Along with *White* in that case, *Blissy* might be the most brilliant local album released in years—dead rock n' roll.

Many are available via numerous online retailers, including iTunes and CD Baby.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED ALBUMS FIND THEM ON SEVENDAYSMT.COM



**GORDON
STONE, NIGHT
SHADE**
The legend
continues



WHALES AND WOLVES, GREEN AND GREY
intriguing albeit flawed debut from local indie folk duo



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NOVEMBER 24-31, 2006

Great Expectations

Most musicians can only dream of being awarded a Grammy one day to what happens to the lucky few who earn one for a debut album, like singer-songwriter Shaina Calvert? The Truxton-based artist, at *Ready Or Not*, raised the bar even higher. Since that 1999 success, she's continued the winning streak with eight acclaimed recordings of what the Associated Press calls "sassy, hip-hop folk pop" and picked up a Grammy for recorded the Year and Song of the Year for "Runy Come Home" along the way. Pretty impressive, no? Even more exciting: You can catch this singer live in Barn on Friday. With a recent release of live tunes under her belt and a moment in the works, she'll keep operators on the edge of their seats to see what the songstress is up next.

SHAWN COLVIN

Friday November 6, 8 p.m. at Shore Opera House \$30-34
info: 626-2305; www.shoreoperahouse.org



FRI.06 | MUSIC

The Good Kind

Some things are too good to let slip away. That's what the six members of the Bluegrass Gospel Project figured when they played a one-nighter in Burlington show in 2001. Motivated to say, these bluegrass-American acoustic-playing Northlanders kept the ball rolling, and they're back in Burlington with one of their annual concerts benefiting Vermont's Vermont for the eighth year. The band proves it's "a force to be reckoned with onstage," as Vermont *Lifestyles*, to support this nonprofit group that sends high schoolers down South each spring for community work. In 55th player Gene White Jr.'s mind, VV is "the 'poster child' for grassroots social justice and community building." He also notes that "the music never" when BGJ play for a cause. Go ahead, hear what he means.

BLUEGRASS GOSPEL PROJECT

Friday November 6, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the University Church in Burlington \$20 info: 653-3988; www.bluegrassgospelproject.com



Slightly Scandalous

Director Peter Horgan had several reasons for forwarding Richard Bressly Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* from the 18th century to the swamped 1960s, but the most mentioned is probably the just couldn't picture 18th St. Michael's College cast members in period attire appearing onto the Flynnspace stage. "Audience from the '60s are a little more compact," he explains — not to mention that the peace-and-love era is a "fun visual period to dress from." Does time travel affect the message of this

comedy of manners, which involves mixed rumors and backstabbing and throws in a healthy dose of mistaken identity? Arguably, not so much. "Trenchery and gossip (unfortunately) never go out of style," opines Horgan. And as for the Vils setting — well, a play first performed in 1777 can't get more real than that.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

Wednesday November 4 through Saturday November 7, 7 p.m., at the Flynnspace in Burlington; free tickets required; info: 654-8611; www.stmcc.edu

WED.04-SAT.07
THEATER

Still Smiling

Thank-you gifts can range from flowers to baked goods to appreciative words. But will a bag of "hundred of jokes suffice?" That's OK by Burlington comic Thistle Spencer, whom you may recognize as the former alien donning a wedding dress. After her daughter had a positive experience at the Vermont Children's Hospital, Spencer felt she owed the place some love. The staff "checked on us constantly, and we felt like we were in great hands," she says. She whipped up a comedy show, now in its second year, to benefit the Fletcher Allen establishment. Local yankers Oliver Hartley and Jason P. Leather join in the standup laughs fest, bringing polished quips from collective gigs at the Flynn, the Higher Ground Comedy Book, and even NBC's "Last Comic Standing." Get ready for a belly laugh — but remember to say "thanks!"

'COMEDY FOR A CAUSE'

Friday November 6, 8 p.m. at the Sherman Hall in South Burlington \$30-35; info: 653-9966; www.flynnbc.org



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calendar

WED 10-4 PM

BAVA, SIGAL. An award-winning Israeli bodybuilder, educator, and author, Bava will be speaking at the 10th Annual Bodybuilding and Fitness Conference, which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT, on Wednesday, November 10, 2014. Bava will be speaking at 10:00 AM. For more information, call 855-3214.

PETER GAZDAR. A leading expert on the history of the English language, GAZDAR will be speaking at the 10th Annual Bodybuilding and Fitness Conference, which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT, on Wednesday, November 10, 2014. GAZDAR will be speaking at 10:00 AM. For more information, call 855-3214.

NON-PROFIT. The National Non-Profit Association (NNPA) will be holding a conference on November 10, 2014, at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT. The conference will focus on the latest trends in the non-profit sector, including fundraising, marketing, and governance. For more information, call 855-3214.

SCOTT GILLES. A leading expert on the history of the English language, GILLES will be speaking at the 10th Annual Bodybuilding and Fitness Conference, which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT, on Wednesday, November 10, 2014. GILLES will be speaking at 10:00 AM. For more information, call 855-3214.

SARIT RIVKIN-SAMIRI. A leading expert on the history of the English language, RIVKIN-SAMIRI will be speaking at the 10th Annual Bodybuilding and Fitness Conference, which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT, on Wednesday, November 10, 2014. RIVKIN-SAMIRI will be speaking at 10:00 AM. For more information, call 855-3214.

PARALLEL. A leading expert on the history of the English language, PARALLEL will be speaking at the 10th Annual Bodybuilding and Fitness Conference, which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT, on Wednesday, November 10, 2014. PARALLEL will be speaking at 10:00 AM. For more information, call 855-3214.

THE SCHOENBERG FOUNDATION. A leading expert on the history of the English language, SCHOENBERG will be speaking at the 10th Annual Bodybuilding and Fitness Conference, which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center in Burlington, VT, on Wednesday, November 10, 2014. SCHOENBERG will be speaking at 10:00 AM. For more information, call 855-3214.

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Picture Perfect

BY KEVIN J. KELLEY

Kathleen Koehn's backup studio in Lenox is as meticulously arranged and academically lit as any art gallery. It's a place where the paintings of regional Vermont artists hang on the walls, and the artist's work is on display in the center of the room.

Koehn's conservative control results in a polished yet idiosyncratic landscape that can fetch five-figure prices at the Clark Gallery in New York and the Third Party Gallery in Manhattan. Her clean, crisp, and sure hand of execution has earned Koehn, 58, a place among the few Vermont artists who earn a living solely from their art. And yet her steady style and exacting technique have left her feeling frustrated.

"I wish I could let go a little," Koehn confesses during a tour of her current exhibit at the Jackson Gallery in Middlebury's Town Hall Theater. "I do get pretty attached to details. There's this critic in my head that's always saying, 'Clean it up, clean it up! And when I look at a finished piece, I see parts that I wish I could have done better."

"But looking at the later work of some artists, I see their hope for me to loosen up," Koehn adds with a bemused smile.

The couple of dozen oil and watercolorists in Middlebury have a photographic quality that makes them more effortless as well as flawless. And it's true that Koehn typically turns out one of her polished paintings as just a couple of weeks. The creative process doesn't unfold easily, however.

"The experience of making a painting is like rolling a rock up a hill," she explains. "We're going to make it, we're going to make it, I keep telling myself. It's also as if it's a dream. You're going through a struggle with the hope of coming to a resolution."

Koehn refuses her comparisons with a seldom mentioned constant that makes them present and not merely pretty. Her rendering of light levels is meticulously mixed to mimic the farthest scenes, which seldom contain human figures. Some of the influences she cites — the 19th-century American landscape painter J.M.W. Turner, for example — can hardly be detected in her radiant landscapes, but a little sense of comparative viewing is one that Koehn insists upon. She also pays homage to Edward Hopper (1897-1967) "for his steady, understated qualities."

Walking home from Catholic elementary school in Cleveland, Koehn remembered the results by "the gauzy quality of late afternoon light." Daylight is on the wane in many of her paintings. A scene of rural Vermont may appear timeless, but it's actually as fresh as the moment it depicts.

Like a good writer, this accomplished artist knows it's better to show than to tell. Koehn is not trying to make a statement. She is painting a picture for an audience to own. And Koehn is not, including her own. She says, "People need it, and they respond to it."



in a serene way. They relate to the formal beauty but also to the content."

Koehn's subtle upstroke pencil marks suggest a sense of calm and control, and after a two-week visit to Newfoundland in the spring of 2008, inspired by a Lake Umbagog scene by Will Barnard (1893-1993) that she saw at the Wakefield Art Center in Hartford, Conn., Koehn decided to draw 700 miles in pencil as a series of sketches. "I wish I had the camera," she says.

"Visitors of these sedately exquisite images at the Jackson Gallery won't immediately think, 'Gee, God, global warming is going to melt them all.' But that's the implication of what Koehn has created. 'It will come to ruin to anyone who's open to a subliminal message,'" she says. "My hope is that the category of the beauty will carry the message."

Koehn's sketches are also seductive because of the way in which they were painted. She usually works in her studio from photographs she takes, but a couple of the ice-berg paintings were done on plein air. She says she had to hurry to finish the layer of the oil, called "The Green Mountains," she says — it was starting to rain and her traveling companion was getting hungry. As a result, her brushwork here has the very loose, almost abstract quality she likes. It makes the whiteness of the ice thinner and shows, giving this painting more personality than is generally noted to her work.



YOU HAVE TO KNOW AND LOVE A LANDSCAPE TO PAINT IT WELL.

KATHLEEN KOEHN

lay. But it's really a blend and whole study of mechanics and organic shapes. Koehn drew it with charcoal but had made herself to feel connected with a human creative activity that is being going on for millions," she explains.

Looking at Vermont is the subject of a few other works in this show that demonstrates Koehn's thematic as well as aesthetic range. She doesn't only paint rural life, she also shows workers using heavy machinery to wrest a living from a rugged land. But, with the exception of the workers, Koehn stays focused on the environment in which she has lived for the past 35 years.

She moved to the Northeast Kingdom of the province from the Rhode Island School of Design, accompanying her husband to be on a mid-70s back-to-the-land quest. Koehn laughs as she recalls the outcome of their, adding, "We came really close to being in a protracted dance." The couple married in the Greenboro area for 11 years, producing a daughter and a son, before moving to Cornwall. The marriage eventually ended, but Koehn's love for the Vermont countryside has endured.

A woman with many interests and an equally conversational manner, she speaks candidly about the writer Barry Lopez's criticism as "being true to a place." Koehn says the artist's present "moving" track about Vermont landscapes is more people's own landscapes.

"We have to know and love a landscape to paint it well," she adds. "And, while it's a good and a bad idea, it's a beautiful place. It is it with integrity."

Koehn's success in being truthful about Newfoundland and its artwork.

"It would take a person from there to know whether I've done it or not," Koehn replies.

In her studio with its wide angle view of Mount Abernethy and its surrounding hills, Koehn's work is a study in the color of a Newfoundland cave with human reflected in bright blue water. Her brushes are neatly stored in white Plexiglas boxes that line one wall. Off to the right, oil, pastel, and gouache appear to be thriving in the afternoon sun. Koehn seems to sense of the past. She plays while painting, and speaks of the poetry — Mary Oliver, Jane Kenyon, Robert Frost — she draws from books from her past.

It's a beautiful scene — perfectly balanced between nature and art. ☺

Kathleen Koehn's 'The Water Mountains, A Changing Landscape' is on display through November 17. Info: 802-252-1000.

Go to www.kathleenkoehn.com for more info.



Sheryl Gardner Anand Her swirling realism comes from a sure hand, but the lifelike atmosphere is a result of painstaking layers of egg tempera, oil paint and earth tone washes. This month an exhibit of Anand's original paintings, "Verdant Memories" graces the walls of the Governor's Office in Montpelier. Pictured: "Maple Chorus."

BURLINGTON AREA ART SHOWS

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CONCRETE The 11 monthly artists of the downtown gallery show their works in various media all together. Through December 4 at UPM/UMV Learning Center • Burlington Info: 334-0304

TOM ERIKSEN "The Traveler's Journey: The Traveler's Journey" series depicts a series of small portraits of various people from his childhood and the present. 4-10-12 at 20, 2000 College St. Burlington Info: 334-0304

NALORE HUNT "The Mission Project: Project: The Mission Project" is a series of small portraits of various people from his childhood and the present. 4-10-12 at 20, 2000 College St. Burlington Info: 334-0304

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ARTIST'S ROOM Improving its only art now abstract, experimental works. Through December 31 at the Gallery (Fremont) in Montpelier Info: 334-0304

ONE UP SCULPTURE SHOW Lillian and John Clark One Up Sculpture Show and David Hargrove's work on the second floor of the gallery. Through May

1 at Vermont Arts Council Sculpture Garden in Woodbury Info: 334-0304

HENRIKSEN "Sculpture and the Traveler's Journey" series depicts a series of small portraits of various people from his childhood and the present. 4-10-12 at 20, 2000 College St. Burlington Info: 334-0304

ISABEL WENDLER "Sculpture and the Traveler's Journey" series depicts a series of small portraits of various people from his childhood and the present. 4-10-12 at 20, 2000 College St. Burlington Info: 334-0304

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LINDA WENDLER "Sculpture and the Traveler's Journey" series depicts a series of small portraits of various people from his childhood and the present. 4-10-12 at 20, 2000 College St. Burlington Info: 334-0304

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SUNDAY 9-10:00 PM

realtv
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INSIDE SEVEN DAYS
THURSDAYS 9-10:00 PM

30
CHANNEL 10
SO: BURLINGTON
CARDS TO PEOPLE
PROJECT
WEDNESDAY 11:00 PM

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Are you a smoker?

You may be able to participate in a research program at the University of Vermont.

STUDY #30

For ages 18-45

You will learn strategies to decrease your anxiety and quit smoking!

The study involves a total of 12 visits. Free Nicotine Replacement Patches are included in the 1st of 8-visit intervention. Also a 100 mg nicotine transdermal patch is included in the 1st of 8-visit intervention. Also a 100 mg nicotine transdermal patch is included in the 1st of 8-visit intervention.

For more information or to setup an appointment, please call 854-0655

#33

For ages 18-45

This study involves 2 hours, a total of approximately 4 hours. If eligible you may be asked to call for 12 hours. Participants receive study pay per paid \$40 in cash.

For more information or to setup an appointment, please call 854-0655

HowardCenter

Legal Notice

HowardCenter, the designated Community Mental Health Center for Chittenden County, is once again engaged in updating its "System of Case Plan." This document is created every three years to help guide the organizations in prioritizing resources to meet the needs of both mandated clinical populations which includes children and adults with serious and persistent mental illness and individuals with developmental disabilities as well as addressing the needs of youth and adults with substance abuse and children, adults and families with mental health concerns. If you have feedback about how the HowardCenter has addressed these issues in the past or suggestions for focus and attention in the coming plan you are invited to stop by Fletcher Free Library's Community Room on Monday, November 9th, between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Representatives from Howard's clinical service areas will be present to hear your feedback and suggestions.

art



Milton Artists' Guild This local association gets a jump on the season with its annual holiday art show and sale of works by members — this Saturday, November 2, 9 a.m. — 4 p.m., at the Milton Grange. Pictured is a painting by Joan Morgan.

CENTRAL ART SHOWS KICK OFF

ROCKY DAND "Things" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

BRICK ROAD "The North and South" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

STEVEN GOODMAN "BENT LAMPS" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

V. WENIGER "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

THE VIETNAM WAR: A REFLECTION "The Vietnam War: A Reflection" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

VICTOR DAVIS "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

CHANGING THE VILLAGE "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

BARBARA FLEWELL "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

COLLEGE GRAD GROUP SHOW "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

the Vermont landscape by a local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

HENRI LARSEN "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

RUTHAN WOLF "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

JOAN MORGAN "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII "The Last Days of Pompeii" (oil) by the local artist. Through November 30 at the Green Street Art Gallery at 1001 of Grand in Montpelier. Info: artshow30.org

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movies

Michael Jackson's This Is It ★★

Many reviewers appear confused or at least befuddled in their attempt to place this documentary in its proper historical context. The *Associated Press*'s Rick Kizmore is typical of the majority challenged, writing that "This isn't even the first concert rehearsal movie ever." Um, Kiz, maybe you're local or a little bit called *Lat in It*?



HEY, TALK BACK! Even the best fans are unlikely to find this documentary anything remotely as trivial as they are thinking.

The pictures share a number of similarities. Both seek looks on the creative process of highly influential artists. Both take the viewer behind the scenes in the arena or house for upcoming London concerts. In both cases, though, far dramatically different reasons these concerts never took place.

The differences between the movies are *devising* the ways in which this is a film to satisfy the desire to which it amounts not to a significant artistic reveal but to an interestingly diverting curiosity. For one thing, the *Rehearsals* were still creatively active at the act of making some of their final music—inspiring musical songs, but by far, also concert. Jackson, by contrast, was merely prepping a concert-like review.

Shot at Los Angeles Staples Center between April and June of the year the former documents rehearsals for the performer's planned *Michael Forever* extravaganza at London's O2 Arena. Following his death on June 25, *Rehearsals* quickly rose the value of the 120-plus hours of high-def video. While the rest of us were writing far too many results to name it, members of Jackson's camp

were busy taking bids from advertising media executives.

Sony paid a reported \$60 million for the footage. The question then was what to do with it. It couldn't be edited into a concert film: there was no concert. It didn't contain the true material necessary for a traditional documentary, either conspicuously absent any anything resembling interviews with the film crew or champagne into his life outside the rehearsal hall.

The decision was made to call it *This Is It*, with stage show director Kenny Ortega, and let him figure it out. The result is an after-the-fact scrab job focusing on the collaboration between the two friends. Ortega is so much easier as filmmaker here, conferring with the singer on cues, translating his often

slippery instructions to the band ("Let it rain") and generally doing his men duty in Jackson issues advice, pressing gently to make production details.

While it does reveal a preference to appear fast and furious and good stage, the film is hardly a portrait of a visionary glimpsed in the frenetic grips of peak creativity ("Money isn't a rightist" included by name") (*Boyz n the City*). No new music is created. Jackson dance moves are familiar, he deliberately sweet but busy during run changes so there are no scoring spots. On only one or two moments—"But It's" for example—does he attempt to match the energy of his looking band.

You have to wonder how he built the other hundred-plus hours of footage most

have been for Origen to devote as much time as he does to kindly short work he is stated to be attempting throughout the live show. A particularly lousy one, set to "Smooth Criminal," shows a Jackson sporting Jackson arms storage. Back and while lounge and features a machine-gun shoot out between the singer and Humphrey Slovic. This is the kind of thing we expect to see in Billy Crystal's *Orion* opening matter, not in the King of Pop's incoherent return from self-imposed exile.

Bottom line: The spectacle Jackson was preparing might well have given him the appropriate note on which to close his long, controversial career. However, I think once the best film will come this on its.

RICK KIZMORE

The Men Who Stare at Goats ★★½

Scientific studies have told us two things about goats: First, they're more apt to decide themselves than previous second, they're also more likely to succeed.

The *Men Who Stare at Goats* is a film that sets out to make the same point: the power of positive thinking. What if a visionary, any visionary with a history of psychotic drug use (Jeff Bridges) got the ear of the U.S. Army brass and convinced them the best way to train new troops, powerful, "dominant" war rams with psychic powers? What if they believe?

Goats derives from the conflict book of the same name by British journalist Jon Ronson, who looked the world renouncing what writer Joan March calls "the more sinister aspect of our civilizational solitary thinking." Among the stories he uncovered was that of Lieutenant Colonel Jim Garrison—the basis for Bridges' character—whose plan for a New Age inspired "First Earth Battalion" within the armed forces was never realized.

At least, not officially. In this fictional adaptation of the book, Ronson's Bridges plays a one-time Midwestern reporter in his min across an apparent crackpot (Garrison) along with goads: a colonel that the army wanted him to psychic warfare, such as killing an enemy with a pheromone (the role) McGovern is clapped, but when he heads to Iraq to cover the 2003 invasion, he meets a mystic



GOATS HAVE STRONG OPINIONS: Bridges returns to America in *Men Who Stare at Goats* as the colonel's comrade.

man (Douglas) who tells him the New Earth Army is quite real—and not dead.

With that happy premise and a fast pace that knows how to have fun, director Brent Hutter (who wrote *Good Night and Good Luck*) and writer Peter Strongman (who produced a mucky looking, maddening movie that only occasionally qualifies as a comedy 2002, it's got on down of good film).

Most of their cast comes courtesy of Clancy, who plays Jim. Clancy is a star graduate of Bridges' secret job and cannot predict (that, they call it) (theater) (John). When McGovern asks him "Do you have superpowers?" Clancy replies "I don't know," as if reminding he had eyes for his life.

Using his nearly invisible to invisible effect, Clancy plays the character as a red-blooded American hero who simply chooses to ignore the obvious evil he's not to be in

project thoughts, view events, and even kill with a touch. Not that Clancy isn't a far more subtle—be it more by the of his own than anything else. It's a matter of the girl followed by "I want to do this"—a natural aptitude, and someone you want on your side in a fight.

For what, as the audience or soldier and the reporter might, around the fence, on a mission that Clancy himself admits he doesn't understand. Does he live a superior first as the old Henry Hoffman character. But the filmers are not out of mind, and it gets in being in the real world.

Much of the film is consumed by flashbacks to the rise and fall of Project Jet. These sequences offer incidental pleasures. Clancy as a peevish rival pugilist with a delusional spirit medium. But the story of military self-deception never dips or goes real moment. Part of the problem is that McGovern's character—who also narrates the film—doesn't evolve much beyond playing straight man to Clancy.

He's nervous, too. Here, there's a moment when McGovern, at wide-eyed moments, asks Clancy "What's a goat?" He hadn't played one in three previous films. More precisely, that when you find yourself laughing more at its own a geography than at its character, you know you're watching the ultimate chaggy-pat day.

HAROLD HARRISON

COMICS+puzzles

MORE PUZZLES!
CROSSWORD PUZZLE
(PAGE 11 CLASSIFIEDS)

MORE COMICS!
TIM THE COMIC (P. 7)
BIG BEAT (PAGE 1)

MORE FUN!
FREE WILL ASTROLOGY
& NEWS QUIZES (P. 12)



⊗ CALCOKU BY JOSH KEYMELO

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★★

For the checking the numbers it is only about 10x10 size and contains. The numbers in each row and column must sum to a target number (the target number in the last column). Using the arithmetic operation is required. A one-way operation is filled in with the target number in the top corner. A number can be repeated within a sign as long as it is not the same number.



⊗ SUDOKU BY JOSH KEYMELO

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★★

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row, column, each column, and each 3x3 box contains all the numbers from 1 to 9. The same numbers cannot be repeated in a row or column.

★ = MODERATE ★★★ = CHALLENGING ★★★★★ = HARD BOY! — FIND ANSWERS & CROSSWORD IN THE CLASSIFIEDS SECTION

DOO'S WORLD

Doog Ogg



Ever been - without even opening the new package - that someone had made him another one of those

NO BAIT

© Andy Singer



AMERICAN ELF

THE SATCHMOON DIARIES
OF JAMES SCHALKHA

please, write down your name

SWINE SQUEAL



OCTOBER 24, 2007

Life



NOVEMBER 1, 2007



NOVEMBER 1, 2007

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

PERSONALS



For group fun, BDSM play, and full-on kinky:
sevendaysvt.com/personals

8-11:00 noon VTFC 30 #10312

SEX GADGETS

Give yourself the next kinky surprise with a new vibrator. The new vibrator is a sleek, compact, and powerful. It's the perfect size for your hand and it's the perfect size for your vagina. **sevendays 30 #10312**

ORING/SAFE GREAT GUY

After a long 10-hour shift, I'm tired and I need a good night's sleep. I'm looking for a good night's sleep. I'm looking for a good night's sleep. **sevendays 30 #10312**

ST CUPID

I am an adult seeking a companion. I am looking for a companion. I am looking for a companion. **sevendays 30 #10312**

HAPPY LAST TEENING BERNAL ADVENTURES

I am a professional model. I am looking for a companion. I am looking for a companion. **sevendays 30 #10312**

LOOKING FOR A PLAYMATE

I am looking for a playmate. I am looking for a playmate. I am looking for a playmate. **sevendays 30 #10312**

KINKY/SAFE

I am looking for a kink. I am looking for a kink. I am looking for a kink. **sevendays 30 #10312**

LOW-KEY/SAFE/SAFE ADVENTURE

I am looking for a low-key. I am looking for a low-key. I am looking for a low-key. **sevendays 30 #10312**

NAUGHTY/SAFE/SAFE

I am looking for a naughty. I am looking for a naughty. I am looking for a naughty. **sevendays 30 #10312**

YOUNG, NAUGHTY/SAFE/SAFE

I am looking for a young. I am looking for a young. I am looking for a young. **sevendays 30 #10312**

TRICK-UP/SAFE/SAFE

I am looking for a trick-up. I am looking for a trick-up. I am looking for a trick-up. **sevendays 30 #10312**

KINKY/SAFE/SAFE

I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. **sevendays 30 #10312**

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What more than just a good night's sleep? I am looking for a good night's sleep. I am looking for a good night's sleep. **sevendays 30 #10312**

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KINKY/SAFE/SAFE

I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. **sevendays 30 #10312**

KINK OF THE WEEK:

FANES, CLAWS & HOT BOOTS

I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. **sevendays 30 #10312**

KINKY/SAFE/SAFE

I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. I am looking for a kinky. **sevendays 30 #10312**

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KINKY/SAFE/SAFE

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